

‘IT’S ABOUT NORMAL TEACHERS LIKE ME’: A CASE STUDY OF THREE TEACHER LEADERS IN AN URBAN PRIMARY SCHOOL

**PIETERMARITZBURG, KWAZULU-NATAL, SOUTH
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BY

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ABSTRACT

Traditionally South African Schools are characterised by the hierarchical nature of their management structures. The principal is the head of the school and is accountable to the Department of Education. Post 1994 school management teams are in place in schools and membership includes the principal, deputy principal and HOD's who hold the formal management positions. Teachers who are not formally appointed to leadership positions are categorized as level-one teachers. Hence, this dissertation works from the premise that these teachers play an important role as leaders, albeit in an informal capacity. These teachers play an important role as leaders, albeit in an informal capacity. Teacher leadership enactment is prevalent in South African Schools, but to varying degrees. Every teacher is a potential teacher leader and therefore every school has an immense wealth of expertise in terms of teacher leadership. However, within the context of their environments, human resources are utilized to varying degrees in the different schools.

The research questions which guided this study included: "How is teacher leadership enacted in an urban primary school?" and "What factors promote or hinder this enactment?" The study was designed as a case study which was conducted within the interpretive paradigm and was mainly qualitative in nature. Data were gathered by means of survey questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, a focus group interview, journal entries and observation schedules. The case study was of an urban primary school in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa. Data were predominantly qualitative and were analysed using thematic content analysis. Findings of the study were that teacher leadership enactment occurred across all four zones, mostly in zone one (in the classroom) and zone two (working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities). Teacher leadership enactment was very restricted in zone three (outside the classroom in whole school development). Enhancing factors included that there was shared decision-making, a collaborative learning environment and delegation of duties from an informal position.

The main barriers were a lack of dialogic space, an overemphasis on control by the SMT and lack of time to enact teacher leadership.

DECLARATION

I, ALPHONSO ERIC ORDWALL JASSON, declare that the work presented in this document is my own. Any references to work by other people have been duly acknowledged.

Signed:

I declare that his dissertation has been submitted with/without my approval.

Signed:

Callie Grant (Supervisor)

Pietermaritzburg.

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1. INTRODUCTION

In this dissertation I describe my research on how teacher leadership is enacted in the context of an urban primary school in Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa. I also research the factors that promote or hinder teacher leadership enactment in the school. In sections of this chapter, I sketch the background to the study and the rationale. I present the aim of the study and the key research questions as well as the research design and the methodology. In addition I describe the group research project and the theoretical framing. A description of the layout of the study concludes the chapter.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Prior to 1994, South African Schools were very tightly divided into separate race groups. Support from the government for the different race groups was characterized by unequal distribution of resources. The monetary allocations to schools per pupil differed significantly from one race group to another. The inequalities that existed, because of government policy at the time, had a negative effect on the quality of the education that was offered to some groups, particularly Black South Africans. Christie (1998, p.284) maintains that “the reasons for the demise in black schooling may be traced back to the years of opposition to apartheid and the resistance struggle, waged within schooling from 1976 onwards”. Christie (1998) states that,

post 1994, intervention is needed in these ‘African’ schools to change the culture of teaching and learning rather than to restore a culture that was undesirable. Christie (1998, p.295) cites the Gauteng Department of Education and Culture (1996) who state: “given that learning and teaching in black schools was of questionable quality during apartheid years, what is required is the transformation rather than restoration of the culture of learning and teaching”. I agree with this point because one must question the merits of restoring a culture that was at such low ebb. It did not make sense to spend resources on preserving an education structure that was wholly rejected by the majority. In direct response, the Norms and Standards of Educators Act (1997a) proposes a shift from an input- and product-based curriculum to a process- and competence-based curriculum which is reflected in other government initiatives, such as the National Qualifications Framework (NQF - 1996) and Curriculum 2005’s outcome-based education (Sedibe, 1998 p. 275). Clearly there was an urgency to completely overhaul the education system. According to Christie (1998, p.294), “departments needed to be seen to be moving away from the authoritarianism of their apartheid predecessors towards democracy, transparency and accountability which are catchwords of the new government”.

It was not surprising then that democratic changes made by the new government would usher in fresh thinking in South African Education. The hierarchical nature of the structures in schools was a characteristic that challenged democratic practices and warranted debate. This realization by those in power set the scene to herald in policies for change. After 1994, certain policies, namely The South African Schools’ Act (1996), the Government Gazette of the Norms and Standards for Teacher Education (1998) and the Task Team report on Education Management Development (1996) were put in place to re-organize schools from their traditionally top-down leadership and management structures to broader based models where management was shared laterally. The South African context desired organizations that practiced more shared or distributed leadership and management. However change was not going to be easy to implement. Policies and reports abound in the context of South African Education. However, whether the practice follows through adequately on the policies is an issue that needs to be explored further. According to Harley, Barasa, Bertram, Mattson and Pillay (2000, p.287), “one of the most daunting challenges facing South Africa’s first democratically elected government was the transformation of apartheid education. The new government inherited a fragmented, racially polarized, profoundly unequal system of education”. The road to the ideal situation, namely, the

delivery of quality education, was slow. Soudien (2006, p.182) observes that “South Africans are having to come to terms with the reality, as the Americans did in the post-bellum era, that its almost 350-year long history cannot be remade in a mere decade and much less can its social formations, inscribed as they are in fracturing language of race and class, be re-composed by 10 years of democracy”. Sedibe expresses the following view:

The process of transformation is a continuous and complex one. Needless to say, apartheid education cannot be transformed overnight. Concerted effort and time should be put into undertaking outstanding work and developing strategies for the implementation of new policy imperatives (1998, p.280).

The South African Schools Act (1996) was reputed by the Task Team Report on Education Management Development (1996) to facilitate an education management system which operated from within the school. In other words, external directives to the school would be minimized. According to The Task Team Report on Education Management Development (1996), self-management of schools would determine the extent of transformation, which is to say that the nature and quality of change would depend on the internal management at each school. According to The Task Team Report on Education Management Development (1996), power should be shared by management and should be transformational, which, according to Astin & Astin, is “concerned with fostering change” (2000, p.9). Self-management must be accompanied by an internal devolution of power within the school and by transformational leadership. The ideal scenario for a successful and effective education system for South Africa is where there is a trade-off of bureaucratic and democratic models. The strengths of both models would be tapped. In bureaucratic models power resides at the apex of the pyramid. Heads and principals of educational institutions have authority, by virtue of their position as the appointed leaders of the institution, whereas democratic models are characterized by shared governance or participative decision making. In my view, this ideal scenario should filter down to influence the makeup of schools and pave the way for the enactment of teacher leadership. Such a trade-off, though, is often easier said than done. Soudien (2006) highlights a problem with effecting the transition from a bureaucratic to a democratic education system. He makes the point that the government was re-forming rather than transforming the bureaucratic nature of South African education. In my view, the ideal type of leadership for the South African context is that of transformational

leadership. Astin & Astin (2000, p.11) describe transformational leadership as “a group process whereby individuals work together in order to foster change and transformation”. Pounder also offers a definition and describes transformational leadership as the ideal situation, as sketched by Bass (1985) where “teacher leaders influence colleagues without the formal trappings of leadership but by qualities, characteristics and approaches that are reminiscent of the transformational leadership construct” (2006, p.538). The compromise between the apartheid government and the liberation movements developed in the early 1990’s, was brokered around the reform, as opposed to the dismantling, of the country’s major social institutions, including the school. Flowing from this, and leading to the second point, these social institutions therefore had to be restructured within the rules and bureaucratic parameters of the institutions as they were found in 1994. Meaningful restructuring could only happen if stakeholders identified with the issues at hand.

In line with this thinking, Christie (1998, p.296) reports that “research suggests that it is important to build a sense of agency and responsibility at the school level”. According to Ntuzela (2008) in the South African context many policies, including the South African Schools’ Act (1996), have been introduced with the sole purpose of improving leadership in our schools through involvement of all the stakeholders, and teachers in particular, in the leadership process. The aim was to correct the imbalance in our education system which was created by the legacy of separate education departments. Much debate exists today about whether the policies mentioned above, have actually achieved redress and if so, to what extent they have been successful. In my opinion much work still has to be done because some educational institutions fight hard to retain tradition by using loopholes in legislation and policy. The question is whether the hierarchical systems and bureaucracy in education still exist in their pre-’94 format, or whether the reports and policies have allowed for a more distributed leadership practice in schools in which the level one teacher functions as a ‘teacher-leader.’ According to the Personnel Administration Measures (1999) document of the National Education Policy Act (Act 27 of 1996), a level one teacher must have “at least a recognized three year qualification (REQV13) which must include appropriate training as a teacher in order to qualify for appointment as an educator” (p.20). Harley *et al.* (2000) underscore this point when they remark “however, as we know, policy has to be effected in a world that is real rather than ideal, and in education the difficulties associated with policy-into-practice are legion” (p. 289). The

challenges to changing the education system in South Africa, and particularly the leadership in schools, must include overcoming the mindsets that were created and fostered by separate education structures for the various race groups. Harley *et al.* (2000) cite Broadfoot *et al.* (1988, p.265), who comment on the difficulties associated with breaking tradition:

[Policy] ... attempts to change teachers' practice without due regard to those conceptions of professional responsibility which are deeply rooted in particular national traditions as well as more general classroom realities, will result in a lowering of morale and decreased effectiveness.

However, whatever changes were brought about caused fierce debate. According to Harris (1997) cited in Harley *et al.* (2003, p.288) "postmodern conditions have reduced teacher autonomy to a state of proletarianisation". Hargreaves (1994: xiv) cited in Harley *et al.* (2000, p.288) postures that government has "incrementally inflicted defeat on teachers by reducing their discretionary judgements in the circumstances and with the children they know best". This affected the autonomy of the teacher leaders. Harley *et al.* (2000 p.288) report that a reverse process was happening in South African education, namely, "from deskilling and proletarianisation, to reskilling and professionalisation. In other words, as conditions changed, creating a suitable environment for the practice of teacher leadership, teachers were given more status. Smyth and Dow (1998) cited in Harley *et al.* (2000, p.288) suggest that "whereas education, under apartheid, encouraged teacher conservatism and compliance, new curriculum legislation increases teacher autonomy and professional discretion". We can see that the progression in policy and legislation design was aimed at empowering teacher leaders. The challenge lay in the implementation of policy.

In line with these new policy directives the scene was set for teachers to display and enact leadership in South African Schools. The curriculum was less prescriptive in terms of content and gave teachers more room to employ teaching and learning strategies. An official department booklet stated that "the teaching and learning strategies which will mediate the learning are the responsibility of the teacher and must reflect the learning outcome" (Harley *et al.* 2000, p.288). There was an outcry from traditionalists as they did not wish to move from their comfort zones! In my opinion the teachers were given a certain measure of autonomy, yet at the time, some were unhappy to adjust because they were accustomed to being dictated to and to working under

transactional or autocratic leadership practices. According to Leithwood (1992, p.69), transactional leadership “is based on an exchange of services (from a teacher, for example) for various kinds of rewards (salary, recognition and intrinsic rewards) that the leader controls, at least in part”. However teacher leadership, as we understand it today, requires more than just a follower role from teachers.

More than a decade after the dawn of democracy, we find that there has been a transition in some South African Schools because of the policies that were put in place to shift them from the more hierarchical structures that were the norm, to a broader based structure that facilitates and encourages the notion of a distributed leadership practice. However this is certainly not the case in all schools.

1.3 RATIONALE

Against this background, my study was designed to establish the extent of the change within the practice of leadership, and teacher leadership in particular, in a case study school. Within the context of my school, where I hold the formal position of deputy principal, I felt an obligation to be a part of the enhancement of quality education delivery in the school. I work from the premise that there is a need to dismantle the traditional notion that a school is run and improved by one person, the principal, who is formally appointed to head the school. There is a need, I believe, to develop and encourage teacher leadership so that the challenge of creating a healthy culture of teaching and learning is distributed in a manner that empowers all teachers on the staff to become leaders. I became interested in the confidence, or lack thereof, teachers have in themselves to participate in decision-making processes. I wanted to be a part of promoting a less hierarchical and more democratic culture in my own school. Part of this motivation was to identify the enactment of teacher leadership in my school and to identify the factors that promote or hinder teacher leadership practice. Through my research I was of the view that I could contribute to positive changes in the culture of the school because of my position as the deputy principal at the school.

Much has been researched on teacher leadership in the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. This case study works from the premise that there is a gap in the literature on teacher leadership in the South African context, whilst acknowledging the contributions made by Singh (2007), Grant (2008) and Khumalo (2008). It is envisaged that this research will contribute towards filling the gap that exists in South African literature on teacher leadership. Whilst we acknowledge that teacher leadership is enacted in many of our schools to varying degrees, it is in the interests of the improvement of the quality of our education that we investigate the status of the enactment of teacher leadership in our schools and discover how this practice presents itself. There is a need to contribute towards efforts to narrow the gap in South African literature on the enactment of teacher leadership practice, by teachers who do not hold formal management positions. We need to investigate to what extent new policies, that were designed to temper rigid, bureaucratic practices in schools, have been successfully implemented in schools. It is also equally important that we gain insight into the extent to which teacher leaders enjoy autonomy in their leadership practice both within the classroom and beyond. Consequently, it is imperative that we gather and examine evidence of factors that promote or hinder teacher leadership enactment in our schools.

1.4 KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- a) How is teacher leadership enacted in an urban primary school?
- b) What factors promote or hinder this enactment?

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

To answer the research questions I adopted case study methodology. The research was mainly qualitative in nature and located in the interpretive paradigm. I chose a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. The school was the focus of the case study and the unit of analysis was the three teacher leaders. The research period straddled the fourth term of 2008

and the first term of 2009. It was felt that the fourth term of a year and the first term of the following year represented the busiest terms in a school and that these terms tested the performance of informal teachers as leaders at optimal levels.

In order to answer the key research question of how teacher leadership was enacted in my school, this study was conducted in a natural setting, that is the school, and I looked at the real-life context of the primary participants. The case study was mainly qualitative in nature in order to capture a rich description of the case. I looked at the different profiles of the three selected teacher leaders in my school and interrogated their perceptions of teacher leadership. I started with a teacher leadership survey that was completed by the school management team as well as level one teachers. Thereafter I conducted a focus – group interview and individual interviews with the primary participants. In addition teacher leaders made journal entries and I kept an observation schedule of the participants as they went about their core business, namely the promotion of teaching and learning. The teacher leaders that I chose, included two teacher leaders from the Junior Primary phase (grades one to three) and one teacher leader from the intermediate phase (grade four to grade six).

1.6 GROUP RESEARCH PROJECT

My case study was one of 11 case studies in a group research project I was involved in. A class of 11 Masters of Education (M.Ed.) students undertook to do research in their prospective schools on the concept of teacher leadership enactment in the South African context. The project took the form of collective case study research. The M.Ed. Education Leadership and Management (ELMP) cohort completed their coursework together and, during this time, the group discussed the idea to work together on a group research project. We wanted to ascertain how teacher leadership was enacted in our schools and what issues impacted positively or otherwise on this enactment. The research design and proposal development were done collaboratively as a group, led by our supervisor. We obtained clearance from the University of KZN to embark on the research project. The necessary permission was secured from the Department of Education as well as the principal and staff at each of the case study schools.

1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMING

British authors Muijs and Harris (2003) argue that school improvement can be effected and sustained by ‘purposeful’ or ‘effective’ leadership. I align myself with this view because it is relevant to the South African context and I chose to work from this premise in this case study research. According to Muijs and Harris (2003), this type of leadership is generally accepted as being a central component in securing and sustaining school improvement. Furthermore they maintain that there is a consensus in the literature that effective leaders may have an indirect, but powerful, influence on the school’s ability to improve upon the achievement of students, as pointed out by Leithwood *et al.* (1996). The authors refer to Fullan (2001) and Sergiovanni (1999) who state that although the quality of teaching strongly impacts on the motivation and achievement levels of students, it is the quality of leadership that determines the motivation of teachers and teaching quality.

Muijs and Harris (2003) continue that an initial look at the literature reveals a tendency for leadership to be viewed as the responsibility of the individual and, along with Murphy (2000), they argue that the ‘great man’ theory of leadership prevails. However, Muijs and Harris (2003) draw our attention to contrasting findings from recent studies of effective leadership which assert that leadership and authority need not be centered on one person or located in the leader, but should be shared within the context of the school. The “heroic leader paradigm” (Yukl, 1999, p. 292) cited in Spillane (2006), focuses on individuals who take centre stage and it is difficult to acknowledge the supporting roles that other members of staff play. In direct contrast, Spillane (2006) develops a distributed perspective on leadership. He together with his colleagues maintains that distributed leadership is best understood as “practice distributed over leaders, followers and their situations or routines” (p.13). It is a clear shift from the ‘heroic leaders’ view and introduces the concept of a leader plus other leaders in a school. According to Spillane (2006), a distributed perspective on leadership involves leadership practice, which is generated in the interactions of leaders, followers and their situation which defines the leadership practice. My research sought to investigate just how leadership was enacted by three teachers in the case

study school and, to do so, I adopted a distributed leadership perspective through which to interpret the data. In addition, I adopted Gunter's three characterisations of distributed leadership (Gunter, 2005) in a quest to understand and explain the enactment of teacher leadership within a distributed leadership framing. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter Two of the dissertation.

1.8 LAYOUT OF STUDY

The intention of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the merits of the study and to present an executive summary of the thesis. I describe to the reader a scenario in South African education at the time of the dawn of democracy so that the reader can get a sense of how politics had created an untenable situation in education in general, and education leadership in particular. The reader can also follow the chain of events that led to the introduction of teacher leadership as a possibility in the South African schooling context. In the ensuing chapter, Chapter Two, I review the literature on teacher leadership globally, and the literature in the South African context. In addition I discuss the definitions of leadership and management that are offered by some academics. The study is premised on the perception of a distributed leadership practice in South African Schools and also looks at emergent forms of leadership. Perceived barriers to teacher leadership as well as factors that promote teacher leadership are spotlighted. I also discuss the theoretical framing of a distributed leadership practice. In Chapter Three, the research design and methodology is described and focuses on the methodology that was followed in the study. The design and limitations of the case study are captured. The reader is informed about the various data collection strategies that were employed. Chapter Four captures the findings of the case study research. These findings are organized along the lines of themes that emerged from the data. The themes range from the profiles of the teacher leaders, who were the primary participants in the study, to the zones and roles in which the participants practiced as teacher leaders in response to the first research question. Issues around delegation and dealing with conflict within the school are also discussed as themes that emerged. Chapter Five offers a summary of the findings that were captured in the previous chapter and gives an insight into the enactment of teacher leadership the case study school. In Chapter Five I reflect on the methodology adopted and on the group project. I also make recommendations for future research

and for the practice of teacher leadership in schools.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Amongst many of the issues that are of interest to academics and researchers, is the concept of teacher leadership within the context of a school. A question that we may ask is whether teacher leadership is manifested in schools and, if so, to what extent teacher leadership is allowed to flourish in educational institutions. In this chapter I attempt to give a brief overview of the literature on leadership and management in schools. In the process of unpacking the concepts, I endeavour to show where teacher leadership is situated in the collage of leadership and management. I further discuss literature on teacher leadership as well as the barriers to teacher leadership, within the arena of distributed leadership theory and transformational leadership. The literature on distributed leadership further expounds on the notions of collegiality, collaboration and change.

2.2 DEFINING THE CONCEPTS OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

It is necessary, at this point, to interrogate the literature on leadership and management with the aim of ascertaining whether there is a clear distinction between the terms because it will have a bearing on where teacher leadership is enacted in schools, within these broad concepts.

Educational leadership and management are dynamic concepts that are at play in a school and they impact on the level of effectiveness of a school. Both these concepts are difficult to explain and many theories exist about their significance. Muijs and Harris (2003, p.437) observe that the ‘great man’ theory of leadership prevails, and they suggest that this “possibly is because schools as organizational structures remain largely unchanged, equating leadership with status, authority

and position”. Gronn (2000, p.334) argues for the “retention of leadership, but in the form which accords more with the realities of the flow of influence in organizations, and which disentangles it from any automatic connection with headship”. Harris (2003, p.15) states that “despite a large research base, the search for a singular theory of leadership has proved to be somewhat futile.”

According to Cuban (1998) cited in Bush (2007, p.392), “leadership is linked to change, while management is seen as a maintenance activity”. He further states that ‘different settings call for different responses’. Similarly, Sterling and Davidoff (2000, p.13) state that in reality “leadership and management support each other, work together and are inseparable with overlapping areas”. Coleman (2005, p.7) states that, in the United Kingdom “the words leadership and management are used interchangeably in everyday speech”. According to Lumby (2001), cited in Bush and Middlewood (2005, p.3), the two concepts should not be seen as being separate but should rather be merged in an ‘androgynous’ approach or ‘synthesised’ into one concept. I support this view because, in my experience as the deputy principal of my school, I have to both lead and manage the school and there is definitely a blurring of the roles at one or other time. Law and Glover (2000) cited in Coleman (2005) view leadership as an aspect of management. Coleman (2005, p.6) supports this view and remarks that “until fairly recently, management was seen as the broader concept and leadership as a subset of it”. Grant (2008) expresses the view that different styles of leadership do not dwell in the person only but rather on the unique challenges of that organization and she adds that leadership allows for transformation. I agree with her view because I see the challenges faced by an organisation as a catalyst that allows other leaders to emerge in order to meet the challenges. Sometimes challenges necessitate a change in leadership style or practice.

At my school, for example, the leadership style is essentially democratic, but changes when necessary to an autocratic style of leadership, to ‘get things done’ and to prevent protracted debate on contentious issues. Grant (2008) calls for critical education leadership where new learning is most likely to be taken up as a whole school initiative. She continues that a culture of communication, collaboration and questioning in a distributed leadership context is required where teachers, whether operating in a formal or informal capacity, create an environment to interact with the new learning. In such an environment they share ideas whilst taking calculated

risks in implementing the new ideas. In addition they reflect critically on the process to bring about ongoing improvement. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) hold the view that, within professional learning communities, power in the school is redistributed and teachers can operate as leaders as they strive towards a more equitable society. In expanding on this point Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p.39) explain that:

Many teacher leaders step into roles in which they work with their colleagues as staff developers. These roles may include facilitators of workshops, decision makers about staff development in the school or district, or mentors to new faculty.

Amongst the differing perceptions of leadership is that of Astin and Astin (2000) who premise that ‘leadership’ is a process which works towards movement and change whereas ‘management’ is the process which works towards stability, preservation and maintenance of the organisation. In their opinion “leadership is a purposive process which is inherently value-based (2000, p.8)” and it is certainly not, according to Astin and Astin (2000), a case of changing for the sake of changing, rather it is an intentional process. Kotter (1990) argues that both management and leadership are needed for an organisation to prosper even though they are distinct processes. According to both Muijs and Harris (2003) and Grant (2006), management and leadership processes have traditionally been located within a single individual and most often been equated with headship. Gunter (2005, p.6) states, in a more holistic view, that:

Education leadership is concerned with productive social and socialising relationships where the approach is not so much about controlling relationships through team processes but more about how the agent is connected with others in their own and others’ learning. Hence it is inclusive of all, and integrated with teaching and learning.

In addition to these views on leadership and management, Louis and Miles (1990), cited in Fullan (pp. 157-158) state that leadership relates to mission, direction and inspiration, whereas management refers to designing and carrying out the plans, getting things done and working

effectively with people. Therefore, there is a need for both, leadership and management to function as a united front to ensure that schools become effective organizations. Astin and Astin (2000, p.8) have a similar view that "... since the concepts of 'leadership' and 'leader' imply that there are other people involved, leadership is, by definition, a collective or group process." In my opinion and in my experience, a school is so much more productive when a pleasant working environment is created and where people work collaboratively because everyone is of single purpose.

2.3 TRADITIONAL FORMS OF LEADERSHIP

2.3.1 Authority to lead does not have to be vested in the person of the principal.

There is an underlying assumption in most models of leadership, according to Coleman (2005), that there is one leader in each school or situation and where the leadership of a school is often presumed to be in the hands of the principal or head teacher. According to Day, Harris and Hadfield (2000), cited in Muijs and Harris (2007, p. 111), the literature on leadership is based on the assumption that leadership "is largely premised on individual endeavour rather than collective action, and a singular view of leadership continues to dominate, equating leadership with headship". Murphy (2000) cited in Muijs and Harris (2003) expresses the view that "despite a groundswell towards leadership as empowerment, transformation and community building, the 'great man' theory of leadership prevails" (p.437). Muijs and Harris (2003) further explain this as being a result of schools being unchanged as organisational structures and because they equate leadership with status, authority and position. In the South African context, perhaps this assumption, in my view, is perpetuated by the existence of autocratic leadership styles and a strong bureaucratic top-down approach to structures in schools inherited from our apartheid past. Hart (1995) argues that there are many leadership models that challenge the idea of the principal as *the* visionary leader of the school. Hart (1995, p.10) maintains that these models "illuminate the simplistic picture of social life painted by reliance on a single, hierarchical view of

leadership.” Muijs and Harris (2003, p.445) also say that one of the findings from recent studies of effective leadership is that the authority to lead does not have to be vested in the person of the leader, but can be shared within the school and among teachers because “teacher leadership reclaims school leadership from the individual to the collective, from the singular to the plural and offers the real possibility of distributed leadership in action”.

Theorists approach this theme in varying but similar ways but the term *formal model* (Bush, 2003) is used for convenience. The various formal models have several common features such as treating schools or colleges as systems, giving prominence to the official structures of the organisation and treating them as hierarchical in nature. They also typify them as goal-seeking organisations in which managerial decisions are made through rational processes. Furthermore they present the authority of leaders as essentially a product of their official positions within the organisation and emphasise the accountability of the organisation to its sponsoring body. According to theorists, formal models assume that organisations are hierarchical systems in which managers use rational means to pursue agreed goals. The managers, who have the authority because of their formal appointments, are accountable to sponsors for the successful functioning of their schools. In the South African context we have the school principals who are charged with working under the guidance of the Department of Education (DoE) and in conjunction with parents and governing bodies. According to Johnson (1995), cited in Bush and Middlewood (2005, p.66), “in most cases, power resides with the principal who has legal authority and is legally accountable”. The absolute power of the principal is being contested as the literature reveals.

According to Clemson-Ingram and Fessler (1997) the traditional model of top-down management where teachers are at the bottom and the principal at the top is outdated and not effective. In addition they feel that it will be difficult to maintain that approach to management. To illustrate this point, the principal in our school has often expressed a level of frustration with the need to micro-manage issues in the school, when instead we have the human resources at hand in terms of teacher leaders who can manage issues. However to be fair to teacher leaders, they are often hesitant to take the initiative as criticism from management can be very harsh whilst praise is given very sparingly. I have a view that teachers will fully support initiatives if they are consulted and if innovations are explained to them before hand. Furthermore I feel that

when our teachers are dictated to, they do the minimum because the common desire to accomplish the prescribed task is missing. It is generally accepted that when people act with a common desire to improve and are willing to share the responsibility to effect that improvement, then the improvement is more likely to be sustained. That common desire can be prevented from being attained by a strong hierarchical element in a school.

In my experience, the top-down approach to leadership is inherited by principals of schools because of the way they were mentored by principals that they taught under. I think that there is a tendency amongst our top management to mimic their mentors' autocratic leadership styles. Furthermore, this autocratic leadership style is also supported, in my view, by some officials who work in district offices and who tend to perpetuate unfavourable educational practices which have the effect of hindering teacher leadership. Gunter (2005, p.6), supports the notion that leadership is a complex process that challenges the "power structures and cultures that we inherit, and that can act as barriers to democratic development." Bush and Middlewood (2005, p.66) talk about a "hierarchical pyramid", which they acknowledge is based on bureaucratic theories. In my opinion these power structures and certain cultures in some schools still serve as barriers to the sharing of leadership.

Researchers observe that there is a move away from the traditional forms of leadership to more emergent forms of leadership.

2.4 EMERGENT FORMS OF LEADERSHIP

Smylie (1995, p.4) reports that only recently has attention turned to "more emergent, less structured or less positional forms of leadership". Hart's (1995) offers conceptual and theoretical analysis of the nature and function of teacher leadership which "reminds us of the tensions that exist between cultures of teaching and creating new hierarchical roles for teachers" (p.5). I agree that more teachers are playing informal leadership roles in school and experiencing tensions with their colleagues because it is a break with tradition. The work of Little (1995, p.19) explains how teacher leaders may find themselves "caught on the contested ground of competing views of

valued knowledge , legitimate leadership , individual and collective autonomy , and initiative and control of teaching”. Heller and Firestone (1995) examine the area beyond leadership positions and roles to explore the performance of leadership functions. They examined schools without formally designated teacher leaders and demonstrate how successful planned change efforts depend on the ‘redundant’ performance of key leadership functions by people, including teachers, in a variety of overlapping roles. They conclude that teacher leadership does not necessarily depend on formally designated roles and their analysis highlights the importance of group as opposed to singular leadership in change processes.

2.4.1 Defining teacher leadership within a Distributed Leadership framing.

Within the arena of distributed leadership we may find teachers who have excelled in the classroom and displayed leadership qualities because of their successful practice. Muijs and Harris (2007, p.13) acknowledge that “most theoretical conceptualizations of distributed leadership have stressed emergent and collaborative leadership that would incorporate teacher leadership as one of its manifestations”.

They explain how:

Teacher leadership is conceptually closely linked with distributed leadership, but is narrower, being concerned exclusively with leadership roles of teaching staff, while simultaneously being broader than many practical operationalizations of distributed leadership that have often concentrated on formal positional roles, in particular those relating to middle management and subject leadership (Muijs and Harris, 2007, p.113).

Muijs and Harris (2003) offer a definition of the term teacher leadership and declare that there is an overlap of definitions and consequently some conceptual confusion over the exact meaning of teacher leadership. Wasley’s (1991, p.23) defines teacher leadership as “the ability to encourage colleagues to change, to do things they wouldn’t ordinarily consider, without the influence of the leader”. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p.17) describe teacher leaders in the following way: “teachers, who are leaders, lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to

a community of teacher learners and influence others towards improved educational practice.” These definitions suggest that teacher leaders influence others with the intention of bringing about a change in thinking or a change in the way things are done. Similarly, Boles and Troen (1994, p.11) characterise teacher leadership as a form of “collective leadership in which teachers develop expertise by working collaboratively”.

2.4.2 Devolved or distributed leadership.

The field of leadership is being seen, more recently, as one of devolved or distributed leadership. According to Harris (2001) the notion of distributed leadership is not a new idea, but it identifies with the contemporary view that improvement on a broad front is unlikely to be achieved by traditional command and control leadership approaches. In the light of this approach to leadership, it becomes clear that there is a need to develop, foster and enhance relationships among people within educational organisations. I agree that overemphasis on control in a school is counterproductive and stifles the growth potential of teacher leaders. What is needed urgently is that we get more teachers involved in leadership. Grant (2008) proposes a distributed model of leadership as a better option. Grant (2008) feels that at the heart of the distributed leadership model is its inclusive approach to leadership and its promotion of capacity building. In my opinion we need to build capacity in a school otherwise dependency may develop if the same people carry out important functions all the time. Expertise should also be used effectively. In this regard Harris (2004, p.13) expresses the view that “distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise where it exists in the organisation rather than seeking this only through formal position or role.” She further states that distributed leadership offers the school “multiple sources of guidance and direction, following the contours of expertise in an organisation, made coherent by a common culture” (p. 31). Some researchers suggest that sharing of leadership does not mean rendering the head of the school redundant. I favour this view and it is supported by Bennet, Harvey, Wise and Woods (2003, p.9) who suggest that “the impetus for developing distributed leadership can arise from a variety of influences and that it is possible that the

‘development of distributed leadership ... may be found in the shape of a ‘top-down’ initiative from a strong or charismatic leader’. Gronn (2000, p.333) argues that:

The key component in the activity system which accounts for organizational leadership taking a distributed form is the division of labour, despite the appearance of concentration... The division of labour is the principal driver or generative mechanism for the structuring of work and workplace relations. This is because it defines the overall amount of work originating in the task environment to be performed, and the nature and specialization into which the totality of that work is subdivided.

A constant threat to the concept of sharing leadership is the inclination to hold on to power. Gunter (2005, p.41) reminds us that “the study and practice of education is about power”. She states this to remind us that “much of what we read about school leadership is concerned to replicate existing power structures in ways that sustain teachers as followers of organizational leaders”. However, in terms of distributed leadership this is not the ideal situation. According to Gronn (2000), distributed leadership is a group activity where influence is distributed throughout the organisation and where “leadership is more appropriately understood as fluid and emergent rather than as a fixed phenomenon” (p.324). Gibb (1954), cited in Gronn (2000), was not at ease with the idea of a singular leader and rather preferred a standpoint of interaction of leadership.

Gibbs (1954) highlights the fluidity of circumstances in which there is a “tendency for leadership to pass from one individual to another as the situation changes” (p.902). I support this view because locally, in the context of my school, I share leadership with the principal. We discuss issues and I consult with him before making decisions. Therefore the decision making is shared. However this is not sufficient because as many educators as possible must share in the leadership. According to Harris and Muijs (2005, p.29) “distributed leadership extends the boundaries of leadership significantly”. According to Harris and Lambert (2003) distributed leadership is based on greater degrees of “teacher involvement and decision making. It encompasses a wide variety of expertise, skill and input, in the process and practice of leadership” (p.16). Harris (2004, p.14) offers a view that the SMT and staff need to work together:

... the job of those in formal leadership positions is primarily to hold the pieces of the organization together in a productive relationship. Their central task is to create a common culture of expectations around the use of individual skills and abilities. In short, distributing leadership equates with maximizing the human capacity within the organization.

Similarly, Muijs and Harris (2003, p.445) maintain that teacher leadership “provides a way of teachers working together in order to improve the learning experiences of young people. Teacher leadership reclaims school leadership from the individual to the collective, from the singular to the plural and offers the real possibility of distributed leadership in action”. It is clear from this perspective of leadership that leadership roles need to be shared and distributed and that problems need to be identified, understood and tackled in a combined effort. In addition to the issues mentioned above, attention should be given to whole school development, distributed leadership, teacher collegiality, various education management models, including the management of change and culture, organisational structure and culture as well as systems thinking.

Harris and Muijs (2005, p.17) support the concept of the sharing of labour when they observe that :

Teacher leadership has implications for the division of labour within a school, particularly when the tasks facing the organization are shared more widely. It also opens up the possibility of all teachers becoming leaders at various times. It is this last dimension that has most potency and potential for school improvement because it is premised upon collaborative forms of working among teachers.

Current literature suggests that leadership can be shared or distributed throughout the institution or school. Distributed leadership is the kind of leadership where roles and functions of the school can be distributed to all stakeholders and it must not be seen as individual activity but rather a group activity. The autonomy of teachers needs to be taken into account and teachers need to be actively involved in the functioning and leadership of the school. According to Grant (2006, p.573) teachers can make this possible by “shifting from a follower role to one of operating as a teacher leader whether they are in formal or informal leadership roles.” Harris (2004) criticises

traditional research literature on leadership by using the term “blind spot”. According to her “an important blind spot is the fact that much of the research literature has focused upon the formal leadership of head teachers in particular, and has overlooked the kinds of leadership that can be distributed across many roles and functions in the school” (p.12). Day and Harris (2002, p.960), assert that “a number of writers have pushed for a paradigm shift in the conceptions of leadership which start not from the basis of power and control but from the ability to act with others and to enable others to act”. This opens a window for teachers to become involved in the practice of leadership. In this regard Spillane (2006, p.6), maintains that “from a distributed perspective, it is the collective interactions among leaders, followers, and their situation that are paramount”. According to Harris and Spillane (2008, p. 31), a distributed leadership perspective recognises that there are multiple leaders and within organisations leadership activities are shared because “a distributed perspective on leadership acknowledges the work of all individuals who contribute to leadership practice regardless of whether they are in formal or informal leadership positions”. Furthermore Harris and Spillane (2008) explain that the increased workload of leaders has made it necessary to distribute leadership roles in schools. In addition they mention that “the model of the singular, heroic leader is at last being replaced with leadership that is focused upon teams rather than individuals and places a greater emphasis upon teacher, support staff and students as leaders” (p.31). Calls for a move away from top-down control in educational institutions are constantly being made by researchers. Hargreaves (2007) cited in Harris and Spillane (2008, p. 31), adds to the appeal by stating that “distributed leadership is also central to system reconfiguration and organisational redesign which necessitates lateral, flatter decision-making processes”.

In the South African context there are signs that this is taking place. Bush and Middlewood (2005, p.66) report that “in many South African schools there is at least a rhetorical commitment to shared decision making”. In support of this statement they maintain that “principals of all schools studied by Bush (2003a) claimed to be working towards participatory decision-making”. In addition, Harris and Spillane (2008), point out that the concept of distributed leadership has come about because of the increase in external pressure and demands placed on schools, and that schools have had to reconfigure their leadership teams and find new roles to meet the needs of workforce reconstruction. They further comment on the issue of schools redefining themselves and taking on a new stance, where distributed, extended and shared leadership practices become

more noticeable or prevalent. I feel that these are very encouraging developments in terms of school improvement. According to Wenger et al. (2002, p.123) cited in Harris and Spillane (2008), as schools become involved with complex collaborative arrangements, distributed forms of leadership will be required to “cross multiple types of boundaries and to share ideas and insights”. According to Harris and Spillane (2008, p. 32) “distributed leadership has empirical power” and research evidence is increasingly indicating that distributed leadership improves on organisational outcomes and student learning. Harris *et al.* (2007) cited in Harris and Spillane (2008, p. 32) also state that “there are an increasing number of studies that highlight a powerful relationship between distributed forms of leadership and positive organisational change”.

In the following section I contextualize where the teacher leader is aligned within the broader concept of distributed leadership.

2.4.3 Teacher leaders are principally expert teachers.

Smylie (1995, p.5) reports that most literature on teacher leadership reflects a narrow view that teacher leaders are elected or appointed to a position, where a “specific role is to be performed” and continues that, only recently, has more attention been given to “less structured, less positional or emergent forms of teacher leadership” (p.5). I argue that in their informal roles teachers fulfill many responsibilities and this is evident from the literature. To illustrate the greater involvement of teachers in leadership, Muijs and Harris (2003, p.439) point out that “other writers have revealed further dimensions to the teacher leadership role”. According to Muijs and Harris (2003), these include the role of undertaking action research (Ash and Persall, 2000), instigating peer classroom observation (Little, 2000) or contributing to the establishment of a collaborative culture in the school (Katzenmeyer & Moller, 2001). Muijs and Harris (2003, p. 439) highlight the fact that the important point that the literature makes is that teachers are principally “expert teachers whose time is spent largely in the classroom where they take on different leadership roles, at varying times, according to the principles of formative leadership”. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p.102) believe that “when given opportunities to lead, teachers can influence school reform efforts”. According to Gehrke (1991) teacher leadership has the

responsibility to encourage teachers to become closely involved in decision-making within the school, thus contributing to the power-sharing in schools. Muijs and Harris (2003) conclude that teacher leadership primarily involves forms of empowerment and agency which are also rooted in distributed leadership theory.

There are various views on what is considered to be teacher leadership. Lambert (1998) defines teacher-leadership for school capacity building as broad-based, skilful involvement in the work of leadership. Lambert (1998) suggests that this perspective requires working with two critical dimensions of involvement, namely, “breadth and skillfulness”. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, pp.11-12) identify three teacher leadership role functions:

First, a teacher may offer leadership to students or to colleagues in carrying out their responsibilities. Second, the function of a teacher leader may be to contribute to operational tasks within or outside the school. Finally, teacher leaders may function in governance or in decision-making capacities within or outside the school.

Some researchers take the responsibility of leadership beyond the teachers. In terms of broad-based involvement, Lambert (1998) refers to many people, such as teachers, parents, pupils and community being involved with the work of leadership. In the context of South Africa, parents who serve on governing bodies display leadership skills during the course of carrying out their duties. They participate in decision making processes whereby they interrogate, ratify and guide the SMT in the implementation of short and long-term goals. Children serve as prefects, class captains or group leaders and are required to enact leadership in those roles. In terms of skillfulness, Lambert (1998) further refers to participants who show leadership disposition and who practice skilful involvement by having a comprehensive understanding and by demonstrating proficiency. I believe that our teachers have the skills and creativity to carry out tasks proficiently. According to Smylie (1995, p.5) “the most visible opportunities for teacher leadership have come from now familiar forms of work redesign-career ladders; lead, master, and mentor teacher roles; and participative decision making”. He takes the position that the broader context of the teacher’s work and work places is not being investigated adequately to understand the nature and function of teacher leadership. Yukl (1994) states that leadership generally, and teacher leadership specifically, is an organisational phenomenon. According to Smylie (1995, p.6), teacher leadership “occurs in, is influenced by, and exerts influence on

structural, social, political, and cultural dimensions of school organizations”. In addition he points out that several authors believe that the contexts of teacher leadership need to be developed if we wish to develop teacher leadership. I agree with this view because, in the South African context, it can be argued that teacher leaders operate within strictly controlled environments, where the school principal is accountable to the Department of Education, which in turn is answerable to political figures. I feel that whilst there must be accountability, it must not be enforced to the extent that teacher leadership development is stunted.

Certainly teacher leadership, in my opinion, needs to be encouraged to flourish in our South African Schools but, because of the multifaceted talents of the many teachers in our schools, this under-utilised resource needs to be channelled for maximum effect by planned organisation. To achieve this, I feel that there needs to be a system or structure which seeks to find a happy medium between the top- down and bottom- up approaches. According to Day and Harris (2002, p.960) dispersed leadership dispels the “notion of structure as a means of control” but rather it is “a vehicle for empowering others”. Teacher leaders can easily, and unwittingly, work in opposition to each other. To obviate this problem constant communication and debate should be encouraged around issues. I feel that a school can lose focus if nothing is put in place to temper the micro politics that play themselves out in the school, but I also hold the view that too much power is often vested in the heads of schools. Power makes it impossible to remove those principals who become incapable of being effective in strengthening teacher leader bases or those principals who impede transformative leadership or distributed leadership opportunities. Certainly tasks should be shared or delegated. Katzenmeyer & Moller (2001, p.12) make the point that “operational tasks keep the school organised and moving towards its goals”. They acknowledge that “some teachers take on more formal leadership roles in their professional organizations. Teachers serve on task forces, boards, or commissions that have a voice in the design of state or district curriculum and assessment” (Katzenmeyer and Moller, 2001, p.12). I support the view that for any school or educational institution to function effectively, there needs to be formal organisation or structure. However I feel that such structures must be based on power sharing and leadership distribution.

In the following section I look at other areas where teacher leaders impact on the lives of others.

2.5 TEACHER LEADER ROLES: BROKERING, PARTICIPATING, MEDIATING AND FORGING CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS.

Teacher leaders are dynamic people and many seek to emulate them. Crowther (1997) maintains that teacher leaders display qualities of transformational leadership because they are deeply committed to a core set of values and are prepared to communicate these to their peers. In addition, Crowther (1997) describes teacher leaders as showing an enthusiasm that rubs off on others, and having the ability to inspire and encourage others as well as raising their expectations. Other literature describes teacher leadership as being transformational. Silva, Gimbert and Nolan (2000), describe teacher leaders as those who nurture relationships and model professional growth, whilst also encouraging change. Darling-Hammond *et al.* (1995) emphasise other teacher leadership qualities such as being in favour of new ways of doing things. Additional characteristics of teacher leadership are noted by Ginsberg (1990), and they include aspects of mentoring, coaching and development which are entirely consistent with transformational leadership. Pounder (2006) makes the observation that in the teacher leadership concept, teaching and leadership are strongly linked. He concludes that literature spanning twenty years reviewed by York-Barr and Duke (2004) suggests that teacher leaders are respected because of their reputation for being excellent classroom performers. The views noted above are very valid, in my opinion, but I would be cautious, in terms of my school, and not link teacher leadership ability to learners' test results. It would be fairer on the teacher leader being evaluated if there was a reliable method of gauging the effectiveness of strategies that are practiced by the teacher leader.

Muijs and Harris (2003) cite Berliner (1983) who describes informal leadership as classroom-related functions such as planning, communicating goals, regulating activities, creating a pleasant workplace environment, supervising, motivating those supervised, and evaluating the performance of those supervised. Ash and Persall (2000, p.19) call for "new teacher roles, including responsibilities for interdisciplinary teaching, curriculum development, student assessment, counseling, peer review, and parental involvement". These duties were formerly reserved for principals and the central office. These roles and the roles they enact fall in line with Grant's (2008) model of the different zones that teacher leaders operate in.

Teacher leaders are active across various spectrums within the context of the school. This activity is usually in an unofficial capacity or may come about as a result of delegation by the management of the school. According to the work of British authors Day and Harris (2002, p.973), there are four identifiable and visible dimensions of the teacher-leadership role. Teachers often serve in a brokering role.

2.5.1 The teacher as broker

In the *first* dimension Day and Harris (2002) refer to school improvement principles being translated into practice in the classroom by the teacher acting in the role of broker. This role is similar to that of Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p.12), that “teachers assume leadership roles with students in the classroom, such as facilitator, coach, provider of feedback and counselor”. This observation is true in the context of our schools because children as well as parents depend heavily on teachers to intervene on their behalf for a variety of issues. According to Day and Harris (2002), the teacher also has the responsibility of securing links within schools and maximising opportunities for development amongst teachers. Locally, this is happening in our schools, as can be seen when teachers interact at union meetings or at sports fixtures and events.

2.5.2 The participative role of the teacher leader.

During the course of their duties teacher leaders are called upon to participate in various initiatives. Day and Harris (2002, p.973) state that the *second* dimension of the teacher leader role, is a participative one, where all teachers feel that they are part of the change or development, and have a sense of ownership. This is the type of role that we need to encourage in the South African context. Similarly, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p.12) assert that “teachers assume leadership roles with students in the classroom, such as facilitator, coach, provider of feedback, and counselor. Beyond the classroom, teacher leaders serve as mentors,

peer coaches, teacher trainers, curriculum specialists, or simply as willing listeners”. I agree with this view, as in the local context, teachers work together in many activities outside the classroom such as sports fixtures.

2.5.3 Teacher leaders play a mediating role.

Teacher leaders often find themselves in a mediating role because they are a source of experience or knowledge. In this regard Day and Harris (2002, p.973) mention a *third* dimension of teacher leadership in school improvement where the teacher leader plays a mediating role as teacher leaders are “important sources of expertise and information” (2002, p.439). In my experience teacher leaders often have to resolve issues between parents and learners or parents and teachers. Day and Harris (2002), hold the view that teacher leaders have the ability to access additional information and resources critically, if the need arises, and also find assistance outside the school. They are often good listeners and this is very useful in counseling sessions.

2.5.4 Teacher leaders forge close relationships with individual teachers.

The *fourth* dimension of teacher leadership roles, according to Day and Harris (2002, p.973) which they regard as possibly being the most important of teacher leadership roles, is where the teacher leader forges close relationships with individual teachers, thus setting the scene for them to learn from each other. This occurs during mentoring processes or during debates on academic issues, and also includes the resolution of conflict situations which have the effect that teachers learn from each other.

2.5.5 Teacher as researcher, scholar, mentor.

With regard to mentoring “the development of future leaders may take several forms but it is underpinned by an approach which is ‘people’ orientated” (Bush and Middlewood, 2005, p.12). Although they were referring to leading and managing people I believe their view is pertinent to the mentoring of teacher leaders as well. I feel that teacher leaders cannot be distant if they are to mentor effectively. According to Cochran-Smith and Paris (1995, p.192) mentoring can be seen as teacher leadership, but if we ignore the power processes that are at work in a school, it remains “a conservative activity that maintains the existing institutional, social and cultural arrangements of schools and schooling and eases the beginner into the prevailing norms of the local and larger professional culture”. I feel that it is not the ideal to ease a teacher into the way things are done at a school with the aim of converting them to conform. We need to facilitate so that they can become leaders in their own right. Lieberman and Miller (2004, p.29) elaborate on this point with the view that “teacher research is a form of reflective practice. It not only creates new knowledge, allowing teachers to see their practice in a new light and improve on it, but it also makes inquiry a critical component in teacher learning and school redesign”. Still within the debate on teacher leadership and empowerment, Harris and Muijs (2005, p.66) maintain that “implicit within teacher leadership is the notion of empowerment as teachers are given the responsibility to act”. The metaphor of the professional and the client is useful in illustrating that inclusivity is important in promoting teacher leadership ideals. Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p.23) observe that “recognizing that teachers are the closest to the clients, reformers acknowledge that unless teachers are involved in the decision making around the innovation, there is little chance that the reform effort will succeed”. I support the notion that teacher leaders must actively influence their peers to encourage positive changes in education. To emphasise the importance of changing mindsets Sledge and Morehead (2005, p.6), posture that “attempting to positively affect the attitudes and beliefs of other teachers is a major responsibility for teacher leaders and may be the most complex, especially since it is a highly personal affective measure”. Hilliard (1991) cited in Sledge and Morehead (2005, p.6) argue that “deep restructuring and fundamental change occurs when we allow teachers to experience the joy of collaborative discussion, dialogue, critique, and research”. Sledge and Morehead (2005, p.8) contend that “as we consider the evolving role of teacher leaders as capacity builders in school reform, we assume that content knowledge exists”. They continue that teachers need to invest in their own learning as “pedagogy is a process for teachers, placing emphasis on the areas of curriculum

development, assessment and best practices in methodology”. This is an important point because such investment also strengthens the ability of teacher leaders to be influential and to encourage change in schools.

Some literature shows that teacher leadership is important for schools and therefore it must be encouraged.

2.6 FACTORS THAT PROMOTE TEACHER LEADERSHIP

We have seen that the hierarchical nature of some schools is unfavourable for teacher leadership. According to Muijs and Harris (2007), a body of Australian and North American literature exists that have explored what factors can promote teacher leadership in institutions that traditionally were structured along lines of hierarchical leadership. The literature points to a range of factors that are thought to promote teacher leadership. These include collaboration, time and shared decision-making.

Lieberman & Miller (2004, p.12) make a point that “teacher leaders are in a unique position to make change happen”. They further maintain that this is because teacher leaders are close to the ground and have the knowledge and ability to influence the conditions for teaching and learning in schools and classrooms. It is their view that teacher leaders are advocates for new forms of accountability and assessment, are innovators in the reconstruction of norms of achievement and expectations for students and are stewards for an invigorated profession. Furthermore Lieberman & Miller (2004, p.13) report that in “in the last thirty years, the pendulum has been swinging between two polarities: policies that prescribe curriculum, instruction and testing and policies that enable schools to build the capacity of teachers to seriously engage in transforming their school community”. If these changes are to come about we need to focus on those factors that promote teacher leadership such as collaboration.

2.6.1 Collaboration

The advantages of collaborative work are underscored by Harris and Muijs (2005, p.139) who maintain that “by looking collaboratively at student work and designing curriculum , assessments and instructional strategies together, they gain the collective knowledge, confidence and power to co-construct alternatives to standardised approaches and measures”. Some literature has referred to the fact that teacher leadership is people-orientated and that it is undesirable for teacher leaders to be aloof. Lambert (2003, p.14) speaks about broadening the concept of leadership, offering a view of “constructivist leadership”, which is grounded in “relationships, community, learning and purpose”. They argue that much of the research supports the importance of shared norms and values and the need for *collaboration* between teachers. According to researchers it is easier to share norms and values by forming a learning community. In this regard Harris and Muijs (2005) discuss the concept of a ‘learning community’ and stress that it is more than teachers merely forming groups. They explain that a learning community “assumes a focus on shared purpose, mutual regard, caring and integrity” (p.48). Gunter (2005) comments on the importance of leading teachers working together: “one of the distinguishing features of schools that are failing is the sheer absence of any professional community, discourse and trust” (p.86). Lieberman and Miller (2004) further report on a professional community which is closely related to the idea of restructuring of schools in terms of teacher leadership. They found high school departments where teachers held discussions as groups, talking about their students and related problems, rather than working as ‘loose collections of teachers’ who each functioned in isolation. The literature is overwhelmingly promoting professional learning communities where ideas and skills can be shared. According to Sledge and Morehead (2005, p. 8) subsequently “teacher leaders share newly gained skills by promoting, participating, and facilitating in a purposeful professional learning community”. They add , citing Stronge (2002, p.20), that these teacher leaders are on the cutting edge of reform , not afraid to take risks, and the ones administrators typically call on for opinions and help in effecting change.

Teacher leaders learn from each other, and this may be in a formal or informal way.

2.6.2 Teacher leaders learn from each other.

It is my experience that teacher leaders will seek help from ‘someone who knows’ on issues such as curriculum or policy. Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2004) studied how teachers assumed leadership roles and gained legitimacy within the school organisation and found that teachers perceived others as leaders because of the interactions they had with them. They also found that, as a rule, teachers appreciated knowledge of subject material in their counterparts. For this reason they were at ease with entrusting leadership roles to colleagues who showed high levels of competence. According to them teachers who were subject matter experts became leaders because they had accrued the cultural, social and human capital necessary to lead within the school and did not come by leadership by means of formal appointments as in the case of principals. I believe that such resource persons are an asset to schools and help to build capacity. According to Spillane, Halverson and Diamond, “leadership activity is constituted - defined or constructed- in the interaction of leaders, followers, and their situation in the execution of particular leadership tasks”(1991, p.10).

Miller and O’Shea (1991) document other influences on teacher leadership, which determined whether teachers were given leadership status in their schools such as: leadership through experience, through vision, knowledge, and respect for children. The conclusion that Miller and O’Shea came to was that teachers come to leadership positions informally through construction of peer interactions, that “each teacher followed a unique trajectory, ... each led from a position of strength, each was rooted in classroom practice...” (1991, p. 209). Miller and O’Shea (1991) further state that the literature showed that leadership was earned and not granted and as a result the concept of learning in practice is now viewed as ‘foundational to teacher leadership’ and it ‘rests on the idea that learning is more social, collaborative, and context-dependent than was previously thought. It is unproductive and irrational for teacher leaders to work in isolation. According to Lieberman and Miller (2004, p.23) “people learn from and with others in particular ways”. In the next section I discuss briefly the logic for teacher leaders grouping together.

Teacher leaders often complain that they are not afforded the time to function effectively.

2.6.3 Creating time for leadership.

Muijs and Harris (2007) cite Ovando (1994) who maintains that it is important *to create the time* for teacher leadership tasks to be carried out successfully in schools where teacher leadership was being enacted. They report similar findings by Seashore Louis et al. (1996) whose research revealed that in the more successful schools opportunity was created for teachers to collaborate with each other.

In the next section I discuss the importance of facilitating teacher leadership opportunities.

2.6.4 Creating opportunities for teacher leadership.

If we want teacher leadership to feature strongly in our schools, it becomes an obligation to create avenues for that to happen. Muijs and Harris (2007, p.114) maintain that continuous professional development is possible if “rich and diverse opportunities” are created for the teacher leader. According to Muijs and Harris (2003, p.443) “time needs to be set aside for teachers to meet to plan and discuss issues such as curriculum matters, developing school wide plans, leading study groups, organizing visits to other schools , collaborating with HEIs , and collaborating with colleagues. Furthermore, the authors have a view that existing literature suggests that the professional development for these teacher leaders should focus on aspects that are relevant to the role played by the teacher leaders. I feel that we should have clearly defined, and reasonably attainable, goals for teacher leadership. According to Smylie (1995), in an effort to develop teacher leadership, three objectives are kept in mind. Firstly, they strive to improve the quality of the teacher pool by allowing for diversity in the teacher’s work and by including incentives to attract the most able or talented teachers. Secondly, they intend to provide opportunities for professional learning in order to enhance the performance of practising teachers and thirdly, they strive to improve the institutional capacity and performance of schools by giving teachers leadership and decision-making positions, thereby adding to the resources and expertise which are available for improvement.

Muijs and Harris (2007, p.114) elaborate on the point by adding that:

Skills, such as leading groups and workshops, collaborative work, mentoring, teaching adults, action research, collaborating with others and writing bids, need to be incorporated into professional development (and indeed initial teacher training) to help teachers adapt to the new roles involved.

In another view Muijs and Harris (2007) assert that previous literature suggests that there is a need to build capacity among teachers so that they gain the self-confidence to act as leaders in their own schools. This view is supported by Clemson-Ingram and Fessler (1997, p.6) as they propose that “schools, colleges and departments of education must embrace the goal of empowering teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to lead and champion school improvements that enhance the education of all children. Developing teacher leadership programs is an important first step in achieving the goal”. According to Darling-Hammond (1995) the potential for teacher leadership is significantly improved by collaboration with teachers in other schools where they engage in testing new teaching approaches, share their findings with colleagues and participate in action research. According to Romerdahl (1991) and Munchmore and Knowles (1993) cited in Muijs and Harris (2007, p.114), the point made here is that these types of activities boost the teacher’s self-confidence and allow them to reflect on their practice as research has also pointed to the fact that more *democratic styles* of leadership emerge where schools work in clusters or networks directly supported by a Higher Education Institution.

I have a view that whatever initiatives we embark on must be endorsed by the SMT of a school so that there is no misunderstanding or animosity caused by teacher leaders who are being proactive. I say this because the SMT would normally be aware of other factors such as financial implications that impact on any proposed innovations. In their findings Muijs and Harris (2007) stress that such factors are important as teachers can influence others and form productive relationships with management, thereby minimising the perceived threats, by management, which may be posed by teachers who take on leadership roles. Muijs and Harris (2007) warn that there may occasionally even be tensions between teacher groups where some take on leadership roles, whilst others do not, and ultimately the difference in affiliation can lead to estrangement. I agree with these views, as in my own experience, I have witnessed that a breakdown in relationships often results in a threat to teamwork and collegiality, and reduces teacher leaders to

individuals who take on extra work. According to Muijs and Harris (2007, p.114) “overcoming these difficulties will require a combination of strong interpersonal skills on the part of the teacher leader and school culture that encourage change and leadership from teachers”. In my opinion much work can still be done to accomplish this because schools still tend to work in isolation or compete against each other in ways that are detrimental to facilitating teacher leadership.

Teacher leaders must perform at acceptable levels but there should always be the desire to improve on the service that they provide.

2. 7 BARRIERS TO TEACHER LEADERSHIP

It is generally agreed that teacher leadership is being enacted in South African Schools. I believe that teacher leadership is not happening to its full potential because of limitations or barriers. The following barriers to teacher leadership are discussed in the remainder of the chapter:

interpersonal relationships, creative insubordination, egalitarian ethics and bureaucracy.

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) believe that the success or failure of teacher leadership within a school can also be influenced by factors of an interpersonal nature , for example relationships with other teachers and management. They maintain that “building relationships with colleagues can be even more formidable than working with administrators. The egalitarian norms among teachers do not encourage a teacher to take leadership roles. These norms respect the privacy of other teachers, and the consequences of violating this expectation may be to suffer rejection from their peers” (p.79).

2.7.1 Egalitarian ethic of colleagues as barriers to teacher leadership.

There are, no doubt, some challenges that teachers face and some of these challenges may be seen by some people to be resistance to innovations or change. For example, Katzenmeyer and

Moller (2001, p.4)) point out that “although progress in the recognition of teacher leadership is evident, there are still many challenges”. Lieberman and Miller (2004, p.17) report that a new group of researchers premised their research “with the recognition that teachers performed their leadership in the context of their schools, and it looked to the organisation as the stage upon which the work was accomplished. The research found that the bureaucratic, hierarchical nature of some schools often conflicted with the collegial nature of the reforms that the teacher leadership was designed to bring about”. The principle that all teachers are equal (egalitarian ethic) is seen as a barrier to teacher leadership because some teachers would be perceived to be above the rest in status. Wasley (1991, p.147) expresses the view that “to a certain degree, then, the discussion of teacher leadership assaults the egalitarian norms that have long been in place in teaching”. The argument is that if all teachers have equal status it does not make sense to elevate some to positions of teacher leader. I think that the literature is saying that all teachers have leadership potential and that this potential should be utilized in informal roles. It is incorrect then to assume that some teacher leaders will be superior to others.

Traditionally men dominated leadership positions in a hierarchical setting. Whilst it is true that women are assuming more prominent teacher leadership roles it is also true that their acceptance has not been easy. According to Muijs and Harris (2003) when female teachers practiced teacher leadership they experienced an estrangement from their colleagues. In this regard I feel that the SMT must provide vigorous support to those teacher leaders who are being marginalised.

Lieberman & Miller (2004) comment on the fact that teacher leaders experience difficulty in playing their roles in their schools because of, for example, the lack of time to do their work or the retention of traditional ways of doing things. In my view teacher leaders are sometimes unsure as to where they fit in. Lieberman and Miller (2004, p.18) say that:

This organizational perspective helped explain why some teacher leaders suffered role conflict and ambiguity and found it difficult to do their jobs: not only were they trying to support change and build collaborative relationships, but they were also taking on the traditional bureaucratic and institutional norms of the school.

In the next section I focus on the bureaucratic and hierarchical characteristic of some schools.

2.7.2 Bureaucratic, hierarchical nature of some schools.

In the context of the study, Wasley (1991) reveals that teacher leaders generally experienced difficulty in working within bureaucratic systems, suffered from lack of incentives to assume new roles and met with teacher resistance to become involved in reform efforts. According to Wasley (1991), teachers only interacted in daily run-of-the mill issues but not about leadership issues. Furthermore, Wasley (1991, p.5) adds that “it does, however, almost always place teachers in adversarial rather than collaborative relationships with their school board and administrators”. To me this suggests that teacher leaders were not given free reigns to bring about positive change. According to Lieberman and Miller (2004) other groups of researchers recognise the fact that teachers performed their leadership within the context of their schools. Research looked to the organisation as the setting wherein the work was accomplished.

Lieberman & Miller (2004, p.17) note that the research found that “the bureaucratic, hierarchical nature of schools often conflicted with the collegial nature of the reforms that teacher leadership was designed to bring about and that structures within the schools made it difficult for teachers to become authentic leaders”. Consequently they were unsure whether the principal’s expectations of their roles matched their own perceptions. Smylie and Denny (1990) also note that there was conflict between the periods teacher leaders spent focusing on classroom work and leadership responsibilities.

Whilst there are barriers to teacher leadership, the onus is on us to find solutions to the challenges such as forming professional communities.

2.8. Conclusion

In conclusion, this review has sketched what some authors have written about leadership and management. A brief mention has been made of anti-leadership sentiments among a small group

of theorists. I feel that it bears mention, to illustrate that whilst there is overwhelming literature in favour of leadership theory, there are some skeptics. In this chapter I have attempted to explain theoretical frameworks around teacher leadership and why there is a need for distributed leadership. I have sketched the formal roles played by the teachers in leadership positions as well as mentioned their leadership activities in informal contexts. In my view, in practice and in the current education climate, with all its rapid transformation, it is imperative that leadership is shared or distributed, and teacher leadership promoted, so that we can benefit from the collective wisdom of all educators.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

I am committed to the quest for an in-depth picture of teacher leadership as it is enacted in South African schools in general, and in my school, in particular, and to document the factors that promote or hinder this enactment. According to Giddens (1993, p.703) “research methodology deals with the overall logic and principles of research whilst research methods concern how research is carried out, e.g. by means of field work, surveys etc”. This chapter informs the reader of the research design and gives a framework of the research approach, as well as the methodology used in researching the enactment of teacher leadership practice in the case study school. In addition I explain the data collection strategy and analysis processes that I employed.

3.2 RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTIONS

According to Giddens (1993, p.703) all research begins from a research problem which worries or puzzles the investigator. He adds that research problems may be suggested by gaps in the existing literature, or by theoretical debates or practical issues in the social world. Although much literature has been written internationally on the theme of teacher – leadership and its enactment in schools, the South African perspective provides a window that needs to be opened

further, because relatively little research has been done in the South African context. It was my aim in the study to make a small contribution to the knowledge about teacher-leadership enactment in South African schools and, in so doing, help to close the gap that exists in literature on teacher – leadership in South Africa.

The research was situated within the interpretive paradigm and a case study approach was chosen. I chose my school as the case and three teacher-leaders as my primary participants. The reason for a case study approach was that it was convenient for me as I could do my research within the school where I am based. I could get to the participants quickly as they were also easily accessible and I saved time as a result. It was also relatively easy to put research plans, which I made with teacher-leaders, on hold, if they clashed with events that took place in the functioning of the school. In addition, more time was also available to observe the teachers going about their teaching. In this setting I could get a nuanced view of the realities – the truths that were unfolding at the school - as well as a thick description of the data. The notion of ‘thick description’ is from Geertz (1973b) cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.384).

3.2.1 The questions that drove the research are:

- a) To what extent is teacher-leadership enacted in an urban primary school?
- b) What are the factors that promote or hinder this enactment?

3.3 METHODOLOGY

3.3.1 Working within the interpretive paradigm

The study was premised within the interpretive paradigm and was designed to reveal the meanings and purposes of the teacher leaders and ideally the data should be interpreted in a way

that made sense to those to whom it applied (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). The study was further set within the realm of ethnomethodology because it was concerned with how people made sense of their everyday world. According to Cresswell (1998, pp. 20-22) an effective qualitative study has several features which can be noted to evaluate qualitative research:

The study uses rigorous procedures and multiple methods for data collection. Enquiry is a major feature and can follow one of many traditions. The study commences with a single focus and not an hypothesis or the supposition of a causal relationship of variables. Data are analyzed at different levels; they are multilayered.

My research was conducted within the interpretive paradigm and was largely qualitative. It was carried out in my school and was naturalistic in nature. It adopted an anti-positivist stance as I researched the behaviour, attitudes, beliefs and perceptions of teacher leaders and essentially these issues could not be measured easily. According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999, p.398) the interpretive paradigm “is more concerned with making sense of human experience from within the context and perspective of human experience”. Interpretivists believe that the world is changeable and that it is people who define the meaning of a particular situation. They do not believe that it is possible to discover all the rules and laws of the social world, but it is possible to understand how people make sense of the contexts in which they live and work. People’s behavior is context dependent and therefore much can be learnt from them, as in the study of teacher leadership enactment, in their workplace.

3.3.2 Case study

According to Merriam (1998) a case study may be familiar to many people, but there is little agreement on what exactly constitutes a case. Anderson and Arsenault (1998) maintain that a case study is a holistic research method that uses multiple sources of evidence to analyse or evaluate a specific phenomenon or instance. They add that most case study research is interpretive and seeks to bring to life a case. According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999, p.255) case studies are “intensive investigations of particular individuals”. They add that “case

studies are usually descriptive in nature and provide rich longitudinal information about individuals or particular situations” (p.255). My case study research was interpretive, contemporary and occurred in a natural setting, a school. It allowed me to look at the differing perspectives of three teacher-leaders who worked in the same context. My research employed a mixed- method approach as it was both quantitative and qualitative in nature. Since education is a process (Anderson and Arsenault, 1998) and, at times, requires a research method that is process orientated, flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances, and a dynamic context, the case study method was appropriate to answer the question about how teacher-leadership was enacted in the school. The case study approach was also convenient to me as it allowed me to concentrate my research in the school where I am situated, collect data, analyze and interpret findings within a specific context, and report the results of my research. In addition, it allowed for collection of rich data and assisted me to strive for “the same degree of reliability and validity as any good research” (Anderson & Arsenault, 1988, p.152). According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) case studies strive to portray ‘what it is like’ for participants, in my case the teacher leaders in their particular situation and to look at the close-up reality and ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973b) of participants’ lived experiences of, thoughts about and feelings for a situation. Case studies “involve looking at a case or phenomenon in its real life context, usually employing many types of data” (Robson, 2002, p.178). I explored the real life context of the three teacher leaders with the intention to allow the data to speak as well as to allow the situation in the school to reveal how teacher leadership was enacted by the three teachers.

Feagin, Orum, & Sjoberg (1991), define case study as an ideal methodology when a holistic, in-depth investigation is needed. In addition case studies are designed to bring out the details from the viewpoint of the participants by using multiple sources of data. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.85) the aim of a case study is “to portray, analyse and interpret the uniqueness of real individuals and situations through accessible accounts”. According to Tellis (1997) the goal of case study research is to gain an in-depth and complete understanding of the intricacies of a case. Tellis further explains that it is for this reason that many methods are used to obtain a comprehensive set of qualitative as well as quantitative data.

I used multiple sources of data in my case study. I, for example, used individual and focus group interviews, questionnaires, observations and journal entries. The secondary sources of data were

school documents such as Integrated Quality Management Systems records. Yin (1994, p.13) contends that the case study inquiry “copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulation fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis”. Similarly, in my study, multiple sources of evidence came from individual interviews, focus group interviews, a survey and observations. These sources of evidence pointed to the themes that emerged from the research.

Stake (1996, p.236) an education evaluation expert, postured that “as a form of research, case study is defined by interest in individual cases, not by the methods of enquiry used”. In my study the school was the case. In another view expressed by Stake (1983, p.283) a case can be "whatever bounded system (to use Louis Smith's term) is of interest". The investigators identify the boundaries, and these boundaries (what is and what is not a case) are continually kept in focus.

Yin (1994) offers a two-part definition of a case study. According to Yin (1994, p.13) a case study is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident”. In my study, for example, the focus was teacher leadership enactment within the context of the school where the teacher leaders, while not formally placed in management positions, practiced leadership. Yin (2003, p.13) states that “you would use the case-study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions – believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study”.

Similarly, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p. 76) believe that the “most important factor in the development or the obstruction of teacher leadership is the context of the school”.

In the next section I discuss the context of the study, which is so important to the enactment of teacher leadership.

3.3.3 The Context of the Study.

As mentioned earlier, I conducted my study in the school where I am based as a Deputy Principal and therefore the school was the case. The school was established in 1902 and is situated in an industrial area, parallel to a very busy main road in Pietermaritzburg. The old buildings are mainly brick structures while the recently built classrooms have been built with block. Prefabricated classrooms have also been tucked into a corner of the school next to the railway line. These were donated to the school by a secondary school which is linked to us historically, since the venues were swapped during implementation of the Group Areas Act (no.77 of 1957). These pre-fabricated units were stripped from the original site and re-erected at the school by a small group of male staff which included the principal and me. The school has a fully functioning library where formal lessons are taught as well as a computer room where computer literacy is taught. The school has a duplicating room as well as a physical education storage room. The school runs a nutrition (PSNP) programme which is subsidized by the Department of Education (DOE) and most of the learners take meals at the school. The exception is where parents have requested that learners be excluded. The perimeter of the school is fenced and controlled by a remote controlled gate and additional security gates are located within the administration block. Security cameras are mounted in strategic positions and are the most recent addition to ensuring security. The school has an enrollment of 978 learners who are mainly from an isiZulu background. Most of the learners commute long distances to and from school. A small group of the learners travel from Hammarsdale, 40km from the school. Another group travels from Mpophomeni, which is situated beyond Howick, which is about 30 km from the school.

The school consists mainly of black children who are isiZulu speaking and a few Coloured and Indian children. The staff comprises 30 teachers, male and female with the oldest being 60 and the youngest 24years old. Of the staff, 80% are Coloured including the support staff, 10% are Indian and 10% are African, which includes the general assistants. The state-paid staff comprise the principal, myself as deputy, five heads of department and 19 level-one teachers. The five Governing Body-paid teachers were needed to boost the staff complement that had to manage 976 children in the grades one to grades seven classes.

The support staff, secretary, and bursar share cramped offices while the management team and principal's offices are next to each other in the administration block. In an exciting development,

the school had recently opened two grade R classes which totaled 52 learners and these newcomers did not seem to be fazed by the very large throng of 'senior' learners. The sampling was opportunistic as I was based at the school and I also had a very good insight into the strengths of members of staff. There are six males on the teaching staff. The non-teacher staff consists of two state-paid and four Governing Body paid members.

Discipline and control is evident in the case study school in simple things such as learners being neatly dressed in uniform and in the manner in which they greet the educators, non-educators and visitors. The medium of instruction is English. There is an ethos of pride and diligence and it is evident in the activities that take place at the school. These almost tangible values are evident in the displays of artwork in the foyer. There is an amazing diversity of cultures within the school. Each classroom is filled with pupils, with barely enough space for the teacher's table to fit and, as a result, many teachers are frustrated with the large numbers of learners in a class. There is relief in sight, however, because the school has a long-term plan to bring class numbers down to 38, initially, and eventually to 36 learners per teacher. This is being done by increasing class units to four per grade and not by increasing the number of learners in the school. Teachers are selected very carefully, when attrition occurs, to maintain and ensure school effectiveness. Further signs of school effectiveness are the very old but meticulously maintained school building. In addition the school grounds receive continuous attention. There is evidence of order and professionalism in each classroom where a timetable, the vision and mission statement of the school, a nutrition scheme roster, and classroom rules as well as the extra-mural roster is displayed. There is strict control and learners who need to leave a class during lessons must be in possession of a permission card. There is evidence of pride and authority which is displayed by most educators while they teach. This is demonstrated by their interaction with the learners and their facilitation of group work. The school is fully functional and everyday is utilized to its maximum potential. Children are engaged in school work every day and they progress every day. According to Stoll and Fink (1995, p.86) schools are effective when "people within them are also working together to respond to their changing context and to keep developing". It is the unspoken aim of the school to get the children to be better-disciplined and better equipped academically. The school focuses on the holistic development of the learners. There is also a sense of urgency to succeed despite financial constraints. The educators show determination to improve all the time. It is a sustainable improvement that is evident because the principal and

SMT members speak proudly about the physical changes to the school. The staff and the learners raise funds which have been used to upgrade the library, paint the entire school, rebuild the learners' toilets, and build a hall and additional classrooms. The school has also acquired the land across the road from the school and this land is being developed into a sports field. All meetings and planning for fundraisers are conducted before or after school hours. Many personal sacrifices are made by a committed staff which is also motivated and determined.

The principal and the staff have broadened the scope of the curriculum, beyond the educational policies determined by the Department of Education, by promoting aesthetic subjects like the arts. The school has formed partnerships with other sectors in the community such as the South African Police, Department of Health, the Welfare Department as well as local businesses who contribute to the functioning of the school. These are indicators of self-reliance that Coleman (2003) speaks about when she states that resilient schools have the ability to take responsibility for themselves. The school can operate with "some degree of autonomy" as found by Christie and Potterton (1997). Furthermore Christie (1998) says that resilient schools take partial ownership of problems and resolve them instead of waiting on education departments to do so.

3.3.4 The Participants

As researcher, I worked with three participants who I regarded as belonging to a larger group of teachers who displayed teacher-leadership skills in the case study school. These participants were the primary participants in the study. The first participant, aged 31, was married and a mother of two very young children. She is Coloured and has taught for 6 years. I chose her as a participant because she showed great determination and resolve when she was required to start up her class from scratch with very little resources in her class. She made great sacrifices and was not afraid to tackle issues as a leader.

The second participant was a single mother of one child. She was in her early twenties and also a Coloured woman. She was a qualified senior primary school teacher who specialized in mathematics and needlework. She completed a 4th year course in Adult Basic Education and

Training. She had a flair for management issues and was always making suggestions in staff meetings or informally on how certain issues could be dealt with.

The third participant was an Indian woman, married and a mother of two. She was in her early forties and had been teaching for 20 years. I chose her because she was hardworking and well organized at all times. She displayed passion for her work and worked methodically with her children.

3.3.5 Sampling

Deciding on a sample for a study is one of the crucial stages of the research process and stands to influence external validity. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.155) state that external validity asks the question “given these demonstrable effects, to what populations or settings can they be generalised?”. Sampling is defined by Merriam (1998, p.60) as “the selection of a research site, time, people and events in a field research”. According to Le Compte and Preissle (1993, p.57) sampling has to do with representation of individuals and subsets making up the population group. According to Merriam (1998) the number of participants in a sample depend on questions being asked, data being gathered, the analysis in progress, the resources available to support the study, and so on.

The field of study was the school. According to Arsenault and Anderson (1998, p. 125) the field “is used generically in qualitative research and quite simply refers to where the phenomenon exists”. My position as the deputy principal placed me ideally to be able to do fieldwork in my own school. Sampling was purposive and convenient. My positionality at the school also allowed me to spot teachers who, in my judgment, were typical teacher leaders and who possessed the qualities that I sought. It was also convenient for me to access teacher leaders as they were on the premises at most times. It was relatively easy for me to administer the research instruments as I was acting as principal and could create the opportunity for the exercise with the permission of the staff. Consent forms were distributed to all participants in the study. (See Appendix 1).

3.3.6 Access Issues

Morrison (2006) cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.123) found that there were problems in conducting sensitive educational research. One of these problems is the issue of unwillingness of teachers to become involved in research because of a heavy workload. Another problem is that people can be unwilling to talk or divulge information about themselves or they are uncomfortable about saying things which amount to criticism of the school. I encountered such a challenge in my research where teachers, who were also studying, were reluctant to take on extra responsibilities such as becoming a research participant. At least one educator, whom I thought displayed teacher leadership skills, was unwilling to participate in my study because of what one can only described a micro-politics of the school. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) maintain that access to schools can be gained through gatekeepers such as the principal or other influential members of the staff. Furthermore they cite Lee (1993, p.123) who suggests that social access crucially depends on establishing interpersonal trust. According to Miller and Bell (2002, p.53) “gatekeepers play a significant role in research, particularly in ethnographic research. The power position of the researcher also may have influence on or constitute a problem for the research process”.

In my position as acting principal of the school, at the beginning of the research, and as deputy principal later, I had to reassure the research participants by placing the study in perspective and by explaining their role in the research. I had an added advantage in that I could approach the principal informally to discuss the aim of my research and to seek the necessary support and secure permission. The principal and I enjoy a good working relationship and have a joint sense of ownership of the school. The three Masters of Education students within the school worked as a team to lay the foundations for the study. All relevant letters to the DoE, the principal and teachers were drafted (Appendices 1-4) and outlined the reason for the research as well as the teachers’ role in the study. They gave assurances to the teachers in terms of ethics. Included in the letter were details about myself and my association with the university with which I was registered as well as the details of the supervisor that I was attached to.

3.3.7 Data collection plan

According to Merton and Kendall (1946) cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.47):

Social scientists have come to abandon the spurious choice between qualitative and quantitative data; they are concerned rather with that combination of both which makes use of the most valuable features of each. The problem becomes one of determining at which points they should adopt the one, and at which the other, approach.

In line with the view of Merton and Kendall (1946) my study was mainly a qualitative one, but there was a quantitative dimension to it where questionnaires were used and so I could utilize the most valuable data from each source. Included in the data collection techniques were the semi-structured individual interviews with the participants which were designed to gather rich description of the participants' perceptions, experiences and practice of teacher leadership enactment in the school. (See Appendix 8). The data from the questionnaires provided information on emerging trends on the roles that teacher leaders played in the classrooms and beyond. The individual and focus group interviews allowed for a deeper insight into the experiences of the teacher leaders within the context of the school.

3.3.7.1 A Survey- Questionnaire (Appendix 2).

At the inception of the study, I conducted a survey in which the questionnaire was the source of data. The characteristics of the survey that I found useful for my study were in a list compiled by Morrison (1993). According to Morrison (1993, p. 38-40) the survey is useful in that it usually:

- gathers data on a one-shot basis and hence is economical and efficient
- generates numerical data

- gathers standardized information (i.e. using the same instruments and questions for all participants)
- captures data from multiple choice, closed questions, test scores or observation schedules

In my study, which only used three primary participants, the survey allowed me to reach more teachers on the staff and boosted the volume of data. I held a meeting at our school and explained the purpose of the questionnaire to the staff. Teachers were assured of confidentiality and I also reiterated the fact that the filling of the questionnaire was entirely voluntary. I used questionnaires (See Appendix 2) for the quantitative component of the case study as they were relatively inexpensive to administer and the analysis of the data could proceed early. The questionnaire avoids interviewer bias, guiding and cues that can impact the validity and reliability of the data collection. In addition, anonymity insures more valid responses and the response quality is better because respondents may gather and consult sources needed to respond well. A disadvantage that I encountered was that some teachers chose not to return questionnaires or failed to complete some parts of the forms. Failure to complete the form fully could be attributed to the fact that the questions were not fully understood. Furthermore, it was impossible to develop a rapport with the respondent or to probe or clarify (IS, 540). In addition, misconceptions about purpose, questions, privacy or any other issues could not be answered. This influenced results, although to a very small extent. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.317) “the questionnaire will always be an intrusion into the life of the respondent, be it in terms of time taken to complete the instrument, the level of threat or sensitivity of the questions, or the possible invasion of privacy”. In accordance with research practice, I ensured that I obtained informed consent from the respondents and made them aware that they could withdraw at will from the research. I was cautious not to be overenthusiastic in getting every last questionnaire in.

Due to the relatively small sample that was used in the study, the questionnaire was “less structured, more open and word-based” in accordance with a comment made by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.320). Four SMT questionnaires were administered and all were returned (100% return rate). Returns from the rest of the questionnaires that were administered numbered 24 out of 25 (i.e. 96% return rate).

3.3.7.2 Teacher observation – schedule (Appendix 4).

As part of my study it was necessary to observe the teacher leaders at work and, because I teach at the school, I was regarded as a participant observer. The observations were done during the last term of 2008 and the first term of 2009. I made notes of what I observed when teacher leaders were in class or when they were going about their daily activities.

Mac and Ghail (1994) have argued that the participant observer collects data by participating in the daily life of those he or she is studying. They cite Becker (1958, p. 652) who maintains that “the approach is close to everyday interaction, involving conversations to discover participants' interpretations of situations they are involved in. The aim of participant observation is to produce a 'thick description' of social interaction within natural settings. At the same time informants are encouraged to use their own language and everyday concepts to describe what is going on in their lives”. Mac and Ghail (1994) also express the view that, hopefully, in the process a more adequate picture emerges of the research setting as a social system described from a number of participants' perspectives. In other words, we are seeking to find meaning in the encounters and situations.

According to Babbie, Mouton, Vorster and Prozesky (2001, p.293) participant observation is the process where “the researcher is simultaneously a member of the group he or she is studying and a researcher doing the study”.

Lincoln Williams (1988, p.136) warns us of the possible paternalism entailed in participant observation, and “the arrogance of the researcher invading another group's world to get information in order to relay it to the outside world”. Williams is referring here to the question of power relations within the research arena. Wolpe (1988, p.160) notes in her study of schooling and sexuality that “the type of information boys would give a female researcher is likely to differ from that given to a male researcher”. In his study of white girls, Meyenn (1979, quoted in Wolpe, 1988), found that private areas of their lives were not discussed with him. More

importantly, as feminist and black writers argue, in the past researchers have reified the research process with truth claims based on appeals to scientific objectivity and technical expertise, which serve to make invisible the complex internal sets of power relations in operation (Griffin, 1986; and Bhavnani, 1991). Similarly, in the context of my study, there is potential for the quality of the data to be compromised since I am part of the SMT. The three principal participants could feel obligated to participate in the study because of my positionality on the staff.

There is an abundance of methods involved in the participant observer role. According to McCall and Simmons (1969, p. 1):

....participant observation is not a single method but rather a characteristic style of research which makes use of a number of methods and techniques - observation, informant interviewing, document analysis, respondent interviewing and participation with self-analysis.

Participant observation was a useful method for my case study. Hargreaves (1967, p. 193) describes the advantages of participant observation as a research method for those carrying out studies in institutions in which they work. In my study I used observations as a source of data because of their contextual relevance in the immediate setting (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007). (See Appendix 4) .The Teacher Leadership Observation Schedule borrowed from Harris and Lambert (2003) was particularly useful. (See Appendix 1). I used the rubric to categorize the performances of the three teacher leaders. I also used a school observation schedule to build a picture of the context in which the teacher leaders were practicing.

3.3.7.3 Focus group interviews (Appendix 7).

The focus group interview was conducted during the fourth term. According to Macnaghten and Myers (2004, p.61) the rapid spread of focus groups “corresponds to a new interest in many social science fields, in shared and tacit beliefs, and in the way these beliefs emerge in interaction with others in a social setting”. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.376) contend that focus groups are “contrived settings, bringing together a specifically chosen sector of the population to discuss a particular given theme or topic, where the interaction of the group leads to data and outcomes”. In my study the focus group interview was chosen to glean a collective view from the participants on the issue of teacher-leadership in the school. The three teacher leaders, who were the primary participants, were interviewed in a classroom and I used a tape recorder. I also made notes to be used as a back-up. Questions were posed to the respondents to coax them into talking freely about issues that they deal with in the workplace. A limitation that became evident was that one of the participants tended to dominate the responses, causing the other primary participants to echo what she was saying and thereby limiting their input. I minimised her influence by directing questions at the other two teacher-leaders when necessary.

3.3.7.4 Semi-structured individual interviews

I interviewed the teacher leaders individually after the group had participated in a focus group interview. Babbie and Mouton (1998, p.288) provide a definition of a qualitative interview as being “a conversation in which the interviewer establishes a general direction for the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent”. The individual interviews were the most challenging as two of the teacher leaders were very difficult to schedule for a sitting. They were extremely busy at school as well as in their homes. I was careful to pose my questions in such a way that the respondents did not feel obligated to say things that would please me, given my position as deputy principal in the school. Babbie and Mouton (1998, p.289) warn that “all too often, the way we ask questions subtly biases the answers we get. Sometimes we put our respondent under pressure to look good”. Similarly, Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999, p.132) express the view that “leading questions put pressure on the interviewee

to answer in a specific way. The less directive and leading the question, the more likely the person is to explore an experience from her or his own point of view”.

3.3.7.5 Self-reflective journaling

The three principal participants were asked to make journal entries to record their views on certain issues (Appendix 6). Here I hoped to glean more in-depth information, for example, information that was of such a nature that the participant would not freely offer it during an interview. The principal participants were required to make entries from October 2008 to March 2009. Questions were posed on various issues for teacher leaders to reflect on. The principal participants were given the opportunity to express their views freely as they were protected by anonymity. The journals proved to be very difficult to collect from the participants. The three teacher leaders struggled to find the time to complete the entries. Some of the principal participants were under the impression that they needed to demonstrate exceptional writing skills! I assured them that the content of the entries was more important than their writing accuracy and style.

3.3.7.6 Documents

I looked at Integrated Quality Management Systems documentation of the three primary participants to look at comments and scores that were made by their assessors. The entries that are made by the assessors give an added insight into the teacher leadership abilities of the participants as seen through the eyes of colleagues. In the IQMS exercise the teacher leader is assessed by a member of the SMT and a peer of their choice. The three people meet to discuss the evaluation. After some deliberation, scores are finalized. The comments that were made in the report were of importance to me because they reflected on the leadership qualities of the primary participants.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The quantitative data collected through the survey questionnaires was captured on the SPSS system which enabled the researcher to arrange the data in the form of graphs or frequency tables. The system also allowed for instances where questionnaires were not answered in full and therefore minimized how the data could result in a skewed finding. The reliability of the findings was also protected to a certain degree.

The approach to data analysis for the qualitative data involved a search for themes that emerged. I used thematic content analysis. Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999, p. 412) describe the search for themes as “a kind of pattern-finding process where we identify a ‘type’ of occurrence by virtue of it being perceived as an underlying ‘common form’ found in different contexts”. The themes were captured in the various data sources such as the interviews and journal entries as well as the survey. These theories were backed up by information that was captured in documentation at the school. The zones and roles model of teacher leadership was used which lists the indicators of teacher leadership within the zones. The Zones and Roles Model (Appendix 5) of teacher leadership (Grant, 2008) formed the analytical tool which set out to discover how teacher leadership was enacted in schools and to what extent it was promoted or hindered by certain factors. In the model designed by Grant (2008) teacher leaders can function in four zones, beginning in the classroom where the teacher leaders should have autonomy, and spreading out to zone two which looks at the interaction of the teacher leader with other teachers. Within zone three teacher leaders work with other teachers in whole school development and in zone four the model looks at the teacher leaders functioning beyond the boundaries of the school, namely, within the community. The reason for the data collection was to gather evidence to support the above mentioned model of teacher leadership practice.

During my research I had to respect and uphold certain principles that are synonymous with research. One of these considerations was the observance of ethical rules which I discuss in the next section.

3.5 ETHICAL ISSUES

Case studies often deal with matters that are “of public interest but for which there is neither public nor scholarly right to know” (Stake, 2005 p.459). According to Esterberg (2001, p.50) the aim of a qualitative research study is to conduct an “in-depth, detailed study”. Instead of making statistical generalizations about a large number of cases the goal is often “to tell detailed stories (what one might call ‘thick description’) about a particular case or a small number of cases”. In telling these stories one actually invades the privacy of the participant Esterberg (2001, p.50) comments that “most qualitative researchers stress that the quality of the relationship between researcher and subject affects the quality of the research. In the face-to-face interview, true anonymity was impossible”.

In my study, the staff had an idea who participated in the research because we are a relatively small school, and I needed to take special care to write the reports in a manner that would retain some degree of anonymity. I was careful not to cause anxiety or undue stress on my participants (ethics). I was in a position to appreciate work pressures within the school and observe deadlines and priorities and proceed with caution with the research.

According to Stacey (1996) whilst the participants (and the researcher as well) may see the relationships as one of friendship, the researcher still gains from the relationship. My teacher leaders generally felt that they would gain from the research project. They felt that they learnt from participation in the interviews either by the experience itself or by improving on the skills that they observed when they had to use interviews in terms of professional development. While there were some benefits for the teacher leaders, the researcher had more to gain. When I noticed that my participants had some personal problems, I needed to decide whether to “act as a friend” (Esterberg, 2001, p. 51) or to “observe and take notes.” I had to bear in mind that, because I was deputy principal at the school, participants may have felt an obligation to continue with the study even though they experienced unpleasant pressures. I also felt an urgency to get on with my research and to meet deadlines, but at the same time was careful not to pressurize the teachers who had their own tensions to cope with. The line between collecting information for “legitimate” research purposes and invading respondent’s privacy is a thin one (Esterberg, 2001).

Whilst I collected data I had to be extremely careful about protecting participants' confidentiality. In this regard, I was careful to use pseudonyms and did not leave documents lying around. In the planning stages of the research, I put measures in place to minimize harmful consequences to the participants in the research. One of the main responsibilities that I had as a novice researcher was that of causing as little harm as possible to the participants (non-maleficence). According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.58) the term non-maleficence (do not harm) "is enshrined in the Hippocratic oath, in which the principle of *primum non nocere* (first of all, do no harm) is held as a guiding precept". A certain amount of inconvenience was suffered by the participants as they lived very busy and complicated lives which were characterized by time constraints. According to Sieber (2004) possible harm that could be caused to the participant is psychological and can manifest itself in the form of worry which is warranted or otherwise. For Sieber (2004) the psychological harm is highly idiosyncratic in occurrence and degree of harm, and difficult to predict. I noticed during the interview process that some participants showed anxiety in terms of what information they were sharing with the researcher, even though anonymity was assured. Participants were hesitant about criticizing the school management because, although I was the researcher, I was also the deputy principal of the school. I called a meeting with the staff, as the acting principal of the school, and explained the research project to them in detail to get their consent. According to Barnes (1979) cited in Giddens (1993, p.700) "all research concerned with human beings, not only in sociology, can pose ethical dilemmas". I was careful not to deceive the participants in my study. However, it is possible that the teachers that I observed were not aware that I was observing them, despite the fact that I have informed consent from them. I did not wish to see them put on a façade if they thought that I was paying them attention. The ethical question is whether there is an element of deception on the part of the researcher and whether it was justified. Considering that the findings would be made public, it is possible that there would be hostile reactions from the participants or from others. According to Becker (1976) cited in Giddens (1993, p.701) "a good study will make somebody angry". The moral dilemma is not necessarily overcome by making known one's presence as a researcher to those who are the subjects of the study.

Hence, I believe that, in my research I was able to gain the trust of my participants and I also took care to explain the value of research to the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning in the school.

3.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

On reflection, the first major limitation of the study was that teachers were very busy during the terms in which the research was conducted. It was for that reason that these terms were selected, because I expected to see an accurate picture of teacher leadership enactment. However, it was very difficult to find time to set up the focus group interview as well as to carry out the individual interviews. I felt the pressure as the researcher because there were many failed attempts to conduct interviews. On numerous occasions the principal participants needed to get away because of other commitments. Teacher leaders encountered difficulty in the completion of journal entries because of their on-going activities in the school context. The scheduling of interviews also proved to be challenging and even when time frames were agreed upon, I could not coerce participants into meeting deadlines.

The second major limitation of the study was my position as deputy principal in the school. My positionality may have influenced the responses from the primary participants in the study. It is possible that they answered some questions cautiously when they thought that their views were contentious and would lead to repercussions. I constantly worked at putting the teacher leaders at ease during our interactions so that they treated and trusted me as a researcher and not as their school manager. Furthermore, given my positionality as deputy principal in the school, the possibility existed that at times, the teacher leaders may have expressed views that they thought I wanted to hear.

My own position in the school, which was that of deputy principal, had a limiting effect on the freedom of expression by the participants. In terms of the interviews, I was aware that the participants felt uneasy about some of the questions that I posed. I attempted to make them feel safe to answer the questions honestly and without trying to please me. At times, during interviews, when I realized that the respondents were unsure what the question meant, I prompted them or re-phrased the question. There was a tendency for the teacher leaders to answer me in language which was very similar to that which I used in the questions. It was therefore possible that the depth of rich description from the interviews was compromised. My own personal observer bias may have been problematic and for this reason, the data needed to be

easily open to cross-checking. These weaknesses are noted by Nisbet and Watt (1984) cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007).

3.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter is committed to an account of the methodology of the study. I have employed various data collection methods and techniques to facilitate the writing of a thick description of a case of teacher leadership enactment in the school in which I am deputy principal. Care was taken to research in an ethical manner in the gathering of the data so that the participants in the study would suffer little or no harm or inconvenience. A number of limitations and challenges were encountered in the study. In the next chapter I present and discuss the findings of the research.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I present the data to reveal the findings and themes that emerged from the semi-structured interviews, focus group interview, journal entries, survey questionnaire and observations of the three teacher leaders in the case study school. The data revealed how teacher leadership was enacted in the case study school and I interpreted it through the lens of distributed leadership. Whilst analyzing the data, I found it useful to bear in mind the suggestion by Bennett *et al.* (2003), cited in Harris and Muijs (2005, p. 28), that it was best to think of distributed leadership as “a way of thinking about leadership”. In other words it was not so much about what was done in the practice of leadership, but how it was done. Adding another dimension to the definition of distributed leadership are Harris and Muijs (2005, p.29) who contend that “engaging many people in leadership activity is at the core of distributed leadership in action”.

According to Spillane (2006, p.3), “this practice is framed in a very particular way, as a product of the joint interactions of school *leaders*, *followers*, and aspects of their *situation* such as tools and routines”. According to Harris and Spillane (2008, p.31), “a distributed perspective on leadership acknowledges the work of all individuals who contribute to leadership practice, whether or not they are formally designated or defined as leaders”. The teacher leadership survey proved valuable in providing evidence of teacher leadership practice in the whole school. I also looked for indicators, in the data, which shed light on the factors that promoted or hindered teacher leadership in the school.

In this fourth chapter I use the following key to indicate the sources of the evidence that were assimilated during the research process:

- Individual interviews (II).
- Focus group interviews (FGI).
- Journal entries (JE).
- Observation schedule : Teacher (OST).

Observation schedule: School (OSS).

- Analytical framework for teacher leadership developed by Callie Grant and eleven researchers on teacher leadership enactment (AFTL).
- Document: Integrated Quality Management Systems records (IQMS).
- Teacher leader A (TLA) + Teacher leader B (TLB) +Teacher leader C (TLC).
- Teacher leadership Survey (TLS)
- Teacher leadership Survey: School management team (TLSSMT)
- Teacher leadership Survey: Level One Teacher (TLSL1)

4.2 PROFILES OF THE THREE TEACHER LEADERS IN THE STUDY.

4.2.1 Teacher leader A: the resilient teacher leader.

Teacher leader A (TLA) was a coloured woman in her early twenties and a single parent of a boy. She was a qualified senior primary school educator who specialized in mathematics and needlework. She completed her fourth year in Adult Basic Education and Training through the University of South Africa. I chose TLA because she showed true grit by accomplishing what she did, qualifying as a teacher under difficult conditions. She came from a large family that made many sacrifices to ensure that she received an education. She, in turn, did not disappoint but endured hardships to qualify as a teacher. She was relatively young, compared to the other two primary participants in my study, but she held her own in interactions with the members of staff. TLA always offered ideas in meetings. Her suggestions were always ‘noted’ by management even if they were not always accepted. When she made mistakes or errors of judgment, she was humble enough to accept correction. As an example, she once dismissed her class slightly early for what she thought was a valid reason. Her decision clashed with school policy because it disturbed the routine of the school. She was chastised in a staff meeting but she managed to maintain her dignity, despite the fact that she was denied the right to defend her decision (OS, Feb.12, p. 3). This, in my view, was a display of teacher leadership. During the period of research, she taught Mathematics and Life Orientation. She initially grew to enjoy teaching: *“I never thought myself to be a teacher, but when I started teaching I really enjoyed my vocation”* (JE, p.1). She remarked about the learners that she worked with at the time: *“the learners were eager to learn, those who were weak, especially in English, tried harder and were dedicated to achieving better results, and they did!”* (JE, p.1). She demonstrated a sense of dedication to her profession *“I think it was worth it. If I look at my mathematics mark, most of my children did well. Those that I expected to fail, some of them passed and I’m very proud of their work”* (II, p.5). TLA showed that she could inspire her charges, as the following quotation suggests: *“learners went out of their way to prepare themselves for their orals and for their debates”* (JE, p. 4). However, her sentiments about teaching changed during the course of the study and contradicted her earlier views. She was grappling with a challenge to instill a culture of learning among her learners:

Today I don't know whether I enjoy teaching. Some learners make it worthwhile, but they are only a few. The majority of learners are rude, arrogant and they have this attitude that they are doing us a favour. If only they showed that they want to work, I wouldn't have constant thoughts of leaving the profession (JE, p.2).

TLA lived with her parents, her siblings and their children in a modest council house. According to her, their home was like most other homes in the neighbourhood, but there were other striking characteristics of her home: *"Ours is different in that there are seven adults and three children, three little ninjas who live in a municipal house. We step on each others toes and invade each others space but my heart cries out for the children because they can't be kids in a house full of adults!"* (JE, p.2). The latter part of the quote reveals an empathy that the teacher leader displayed for the children in her household and she showed similar care for the children in her classes. TLA indicated in her journal entry that her home conditions did take their toll on her as she wrote: *"some days I get so depressed that the bubbly individual I am at school disappears"* (p.2).

Although she was not involved in sports as an adolescent, she has grown to appreciate its importance for school children: *"I'd love to have had a little more ground for the learner where each sport has its own ground. I love my sports. I was never a sports person at school, and only when I got to college I realized how important sports was..."* (II, p.6). TLA socialized easily with the school community and, by her own admission, was able to inspire people to work: *"I like to make people feel comfortable, especially people that work"* (II, p.2). She spoke about her ability to interact with people, attributing it to her personality: *"I suppose ag jong... I feel I'm friendly. I get on with a lot of people. So I feel that, as a whole, because of my outgoing personality, people tend to speak to me, you know because I don't have ...err this idea that I know all..."* (II, p.2). TLA was modest about her ability to lead and persuade her colleagues: *"I don't think I'm a salesperson, if I can put it that way, I can get around"* (II, p.2).

4.2.1.1 The enactment of teacher leadership by TLA: a personal profile.

From my observations of teacher leader A and in my examination of data from individual and focus group interviews, as well as information from journal entries, I was able to write up the following description of her based on a rubric which I used to analyse teacher leadership, borrowed from Harris & Lambert (2003) (Appendix 4). In terms of her *adult development*, she engaged in self reflection as a means of improving practices. She held conversations with other teachers and people in the community, sharing views and developing an understanding of others' assumptions: "*TLA engaged in debating in the staffroom on issues of school discipline*" (OS, Oct.8. p. 4). She accepted shared responsibility as a natural part of the community. In expressing her views she consistently showed respect and concern for all members of the school community: "*TLA talking to a parent in my office, showing due respect but maintaining her authority as the class teacher*" (OS, Nov. 6 p.5). In terms of *dialogue* in the rubric, TLA asked questions and provided insights that reflected an understanding of the need to surface assumptions and to address the goals of the community. In addition, TLA facilitated effective dialogue among members of the school community in order to build relationships and focus dialogue on teaching and learning. She possessed current knowledge and information about teaching and learning and she actively sought to use that understanding to alter teaching practices: "*we should go back to the basics and drill multiplication tables*" (OS, Nov. 19, p.7). She studied her own practices: "*I thought of ways in the holidays of how I can improve on my mathematics, the teaching of it*" (FGI p. 2). TLA responded to situations with an open mind and flexibility, welcoming multiple perspectives from others she altered her own perspectives during dialogue when evidence was persuasive.

TLA, in terms of her position in the rubric of Harris & Lambert (2003) (Appendix 4), and with regard to *collaboration*, actively participated in shared decision-making and volunteered to follow through on group decisions. She was an active participant in team building, and sought roles and opportunities to contribute to the work of the team: "*we have to show assertiveness and have to push forward*" (FGI p. 4). TLA also saw 'teamness' as being central to the community. She shared this view, "*sometimes you don't know leaders in your approach and you take on that task with all your heart and you get everybody involved from there*" (FGI p.1). She anticipated and sought to resolve or intervened in conflict. She actively tried to channel conflict into problem-solving endeavours. She was not intimidated by conflict yet would not seek it: "*when I had conflict, I normally confront the person, and I've got to do it...*" (II p. 2). From the literature

on school management, Middlewood (2003 p.178) comments on the issue of conflict in the workplace and says that “since openness and candour in relationships and communications would seem to be a pre-requisite for individuals eventually having conviction in and commitment to a common cause, this seems reasonable”. In terms of *organizational change* and according to the rubric, TLA developed forward thinking skills in working with others and planning for school improvements: “*TLA making an input in the staff meeting about how we can best implement the intervention program that was mooted by the principal* (OS, Feb. 5, p.7). Her future goals were based on common values and vision. She had developed an appreciation of her own cultural identity and a deeper appreciation as well as respect for cultural differences, which she applied in her classroom as well as in the school: “*I must confess, I tend to be harder on the coloured children than the other race children, the black children, because I don’t want them to think that because I’m coloured that I’m favouring them*” (II p.3). Her developmental view of children translated into concern for all children in the school and not only those in her classroom: “*maybe I’m wrong in that sense, but the majority of our children are not coloured , so I’ve got to think of it in that way, but it’s not that I’m unfair , I’m never...*” (II p. 3). This comment suggested that TLA spent a great deal of time reflecting on the children that she was entrusted with.

4.2.1.2 Enactment of leadership by TLA: zones and roles analysis.

Through my observations of TLA in terms of how she enacted teacher leadership in the zones, as well as the roles that the teacher leader played in each zone, I was able to add to her personal profile using the analytical framework for teacher leadership (AFTL) [Appendix 12]. I used the observations as well the data in the other sources to place the teacher leader. TLA enacted teacher leadership in zone one in role one of continuing to teach and improve one’s own teaching in the classroom. The indicators were that she: “*included appropriate teaching and assessment strategies*”. She “*kept abreast of new developments and designed learning activities*” (IQMS, May, 2009, PS, 1b) and “*maintained effective classroom discipline and meaningful relationships*

with learners (IQMS, May, 2009, PS, 1c)". TLA *"took the initiative and engaged in autonomous decision-making in her classroom (IQMS, PS, 1a)"*. (AFTL).

In zone two (working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom) and role two where she provided curriculum development knowledge (in own school), she *"attended DoE curriculum development workshops and took new learning, with critique, back to the school staff (IQMS, PS, 5a)"*. (AFTL). In zone two, but in role three the indicators were that TLA was *"involved in peer coaching and worked with integrity, trust and transparency (IQMS, PS, 5b)"*. In addition in zone two, but in role four, *"she participated in the performance evaluation of teachers (in own school) (OS, Mar.5)"*. The indicators were that she *"engaged in IQMS activities such as peer assessment informal peer assessment activities and moderation of assessment tasks (IQMS, March, 2009)"*. (AFTL).

In zone three (participating in school level decision-making), TLA demonstrated *"an awareness of and was non-partisan to the micro politics of school (OS, Nov., p.2)"*. She was able *"to identify and resolve problems (OS, Nov., p.3)"*. (AFTL).

In zone four (providing curriculum development knowledge), TLA *"attended parent meetings where she was a part of liaising with and empowering parents about curriculum issues (OS, Nov.p.4)"*. Also in zone four (interacting with neighbouring schools) she was active in role three (assisting other teachers) because *"she built a rapport with other teachers, helped with induction of teachers and built their confidence (IQMS, PS, 5b)"*. (AFTL).

Having presented TLA, I now move on to a discussion of TLB.

4.2.2 TLB: The resourceful teacher leader.

TLB was a 31 year old Coloured woman, married with two children. She had been teaching for six years and was thrown in at the deep-end when she was asked to teach a grade one class. She had not taught in that grade previously. She was given a classroom with the barest essentials and she wasted no time creating the resources for her children as she explained: *"When I got into*

grade one I had nothing and I had to build it up on my own. I had to build my own resources and I'm still building on it at the moment" (II, p.2). She also kept up a high work rate and this was demonstrated in the following quote: *"I'm a hard worker. I believe that as a leader you have to be a hard worker..."* (II, p.1). I chose this teacher leader as a participant in my study because she was serious about her work and because she took challenges in her stride. She was a person who liked to get the task done. She was not afraid of change. In addition, TLB had the potential to be a good teacher leader and she showed this in the following quotation:

... it was actually not a problem delegating a task, like this morning, for instance, I was handed the mini-soccer to do. There was a lot to do. There was a lot of planning to do for the junior primary because of them being small. So besides liaising with Mr. X most of the time, I'm sure you noticed I was up and down the whole morning, so I delegated as well because I felt the other teachers that were involved in soccer should also be doing something... (II, p.1).

According to one teacher, the opportunity to delegate was sometimes limited because of interference from heads of department: *"we were delegating duties. It has worked to an extent but now we've had a change over with Mrs. X. She wants us to do our prep. like on our own and things so I don't know. It won't lend itself to delegation so much..."* (TLC, II p. 2). TLB practiced delegation of duties but liaised with the principal for approval: *"So besides liaising with Mr. B most of the time, I'm sure you noticed I was up and down the whole morning. So I delegated as well..."* (II, p.1). TLB was raising two small children, one of whom was particularly frail, yet she made the time to arrange her class after school, as well as on weekends. I recall an incident which was hilarious at the time, but which underscored the value system of the educator. On a particular morning, she realized that the traffic was particularly heavy and that she would be late for school, if she followed the normal route to school. She consequently *"parked her car near the railway crossing and made her way to school on foot"* (OS, Feb. 6, p.4). In order to be on time for school she risked having her car broken into or even stolen. I observed her on numerous occasions loading countless books, charts, and other teaching materials into her car to continue working at home: *"TLB has stayed after school hours to prepare herself. The caretaker is helping her to carry boxes of teaching materials to her car"* (OS, Dec. 1.). She was also one of those unfortunate teachers who did not receive remuneration

for her services because of problems in the processing of her employment details at the level of DOE, but this did not dampen her enthusiasm for the task at hand. Despite her hectic schedule, she continued to deliver quality education to her class. I observed that her challenges with her home situation did impact on her attendance at school. When TLB took sick leave, she *“dutifully mentored the young teacher that was in her place. She helped with the finalizing of reports on her children and also assisted with the displaying of art works, created by her pupils”* (OS, Nov. 7.). She described her experience with the profession *“I enjoy teaching”* (JE, p.1). In another comment that revealed her enthusiasm for her work, she wrote in her journal *“It is working and very exciting for the learners. I felt excited”* (JE, p. 2). She also went the extra mile in an endeavor to secure the best teaching resources for the children *“I spoke to other teachers at other schools. I went to book stores and the teachers’ library”* (JE, p.2). TLB also had a good rapport with her colleagues: *“Interaction with other teachers? We always complaining about school (laughter). Most of our topics are ending with our likes and dislikes”* (II, p.2).

4.2.2.1 The enactment of leadership by TLB: A personal profile

The profile of Teacher Leader B as built up from the observation schedule with Harris & Lambert’s (2003) rubric, revealed, in terms of adult *development*, an adult who understood herself as being interdependent with others in the school, seeking feedback from others and counsel from self: *“I interact with other teachers from our school, out of class... what I’ve noticed ... is that I’d like to branch out and maybe into psychology”* (II, p.2). She engaged colleagues in acting out of a sense of self and shared values. She engaged in self-reflection as a means of improving practices. She held conversations which shared views and developed understanding of each other’s assumptions. TLB was highly self-evaluative and introspective and shared responsibility as a natural part of a school community (OS, Oct. p.2). In addition she consistently showed respect and concern for all members of the school community and validated and respected qualities in and opinions of others. In terms of *dialogue*, she communicated effectively with individuals and groups in the community as a means of creating and sustaining relationships and focused on teaching and learning. She actively participated in dialogue, *“I*

spoke to other teachers at other schools” (JE, p. 2). TLB possessed current knowledge and information about teaching and learning and actively sought to use that understanding to alter teaching practices. She responded to situations with an open mind and flexibility, welcoming multiple perspectives from others (OS, Nov., p.1). This teacher leader altered her own assumptions when engaged in dialogue and when evidence was persuasive.

TLB was an active participant in team building, in terms of *collaboration*, and sought roles and opportunities to contribute to the work of the team: *“TLB is making numerous trips to a sponsor’s premises to fetch boxes that can be made into learner or teacher files. She has personally secured the donation”* (OS, Mar. 9, p.6). She did not shy away from conflict but rather engaged in conflict as a means of surfacing competing ideas and approaches: *“O.K. normal teachers like me; I can be able to handle it. I can speak to them, because I feel it’s better to rather speak to a person than to keep quiet and get angrier”* (II, p. 1). She understood that conflict was intimidating to many and spoke about how she dealt with conflict involving management: *“It’s a bit harder because you can’t really express your feelings”* (II, p. 1). TLB was seen on occasion *“going to the office to discuss contentious issues with the principal”* (OS, Feb. 5, p.4).

As far as *organizational change* was concerned within the Harris & Lambert (2003) rubric, TLB provided for and created opportunities to engage others in forward (visionary) thinking and planning based on common core values. She showed enthusiasm and involvement in school change and led by example: *“I came across ‘Letterland’. The phonics were given names according to each sound. I spoke to teachers and we followed it”* (JE, p.2). In another journal entry she wrote: *“I spoke to the teachers about getting our reports printed earlier so that we could be ready. I suggested that the best way was if we punched in our marks early and I would ask the H.O.D’s to assist in printing reports”* (JE, p.2). She also explored possibilities and implemented changes for both personal and professional development. In addition, she had developed an appreciation of own cultural identities and applied this understanding in the classroom and school. Her developmental view of children translated into concern for all children (not only those in her classroom) and their future performances in further educational settings: *“They don’t have social skills. There’s a lot of things they don’t have and by the time it comes to the end of the year, maybe if you feel they don’t really read that well, but there’s a lot*

of things that they've learnt" (II, p. 3). She felt very strongly about recreational opportunities for learners. TLB made an appeal for the junior primary school children in terms of providing more sporting opportunities for children:

I would change their playground for now. I feel that our children are too small to be interacting with bigger children and although we've got separate playgrounds it's still not working. There's nothing for them to play with during ... er break time. That's why we've always got problems with branches being broken, children getting hurt, because there's nowhere where our children can express themselves during break. When they come back from break they still want to express themselves.. you know , by playing and screaming and then we expect them to be much more calm and they can't be, because they've got nothing to do during break time (II, p.2).

4.2.2.2 Continuing professional development.

TLB was very active in terms of the enactment of teacher leadership in the school according to the zones and roles model (Appendix 5). I built up a profile of her according to her placement in the Analytical Framework for Teacher Leadership (AFTL). In zone one (in the classroom) and role one (continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching in the classroom) she "*used appropriate teaching and assessment strategies (IQMS, PS, 3d)*". She managed this by keeping up her attendance at workshops as well as studying further. TLB designed learning activities and used resources appropriately. She had secured some of her own resources as mentioned in the interviews and in journal entries. She was an effective disciplinarian and was able to "*take the initiative and engaged in autonomous decision-making (OS, p.4)*".

In zone two of the model and in role two (providing curriculum development knowledge in her own school) TLB "*took the initiative in subject committee meetings and worked to contextualise the curriculum in her own school (IQMS, PS, 5c)*". Like the other teacher leaders in the study, TLB also "*attended curriculum workshops and engaged in report-back sessions to the school (IQMS, PS, 5d)*". She was "*involved in co-ordination of extra as well as co-curricular activities*

(IQMS, PS, 7a)”. Elsewhere in zone two and in role three (assisting other teachers in her own school) she *“built up a rapport with individual teachers, mentoring teacher leaders and helping them to be confident (IQMS, PS, 5b)”*. She participated in role four (participation in performance evaluation of teachers) as *“a peer in the IQMS process, and participated in the moderation of assessment tasks (IQMS, May, 2009)”*.

In zone three (outside the classroom, in whole school development) and in role five of the model (organizing and leading peer reviews of school practice, in own school), TLB *“played a mediating role in the School Governing Body and was a union representative (OS, p. 3)”*. She was active in *“school practices such as fundraising (OS, p.4)”*.

In zone three and in role six (participation in school level decision-making in her own school, TLB *“identified problems and helped to find solutions (IQMS, PS, 7d)”*. She *“participated in conflict resolution and took part in school-based planning and decision-making (OS, p.3)”*.

Within zone four (between neighboring schools) and within role two (providing curriculum development knowledge across schools into the community). TLB *“empowered parents about curriculum issues in parent meetings and in SGB meetings (OS, p.2)”*. In role three of the model she *“forged close relationships with individual teachers where mutual learning took place. She encouraged the development of skills and confidence in her colleagues (IQMS, PS, 5 a)”*.

I now introduce TLC who makes up the complement of the three primary participants.

4.2.3 TLC: the responsible community leader.

TLC was a 39 year old, married, Indian mother of two children. She described her family in the following way: *“Two boys and my husband are my world. We are very close and enjoy spending time together”* (JE, p.1). She had taught for eight years after qualifying with a National Diploma in Education which equates to a Matriculation plus three years of study. She was a grade three teacher who taught numeracy, literacy and life skills. She enjoyed her work and this was evident in her journal entry: *“I love teaching. I enjoy being with children, like giving a little something to*

the children everyday. I enjoy seeing the children grow physically and intellectually “(p.1). She was a mature person, soft spoken and exuded much confidence in her work. TLC carried herself with dignity and was very professional in dealing with colleagues or people in management. In my opinion, TLC was a silent leader as was demonstrated by the following remark: “*I don’t like to make a big noise about things. If I can sort it out myself, I would*” (II, p. 2). She said the following when asked to give a view on conflict management within our school: “*...preferably, work it out with the members concerned, yes, because you gotta work with these people everyday and it’s no use creating strains, and it doesn’t help*” (JE, p.2). She demonstrated appropriate deference when dealing with management, but did not compromise on her value systems.

I chose TLC as a participant in my study because she was respectful, professional in her approach to her work and because she took firm control of her class of learners. There was evidence of distributed leadership which was brought on by “a fluidity of circumstances” (Gronn, 2000, p.), and according to Gibbs (1954, p.902), a “tendency for leadership to pass from one individual to another as the situation changes”. This was demonstrated by TLC who was able to fit into the role of grade leader at short notice, as shown by the following extract from her journal: “*Grade leader had gone on maternity leave and I had to take over as grade leader. Sort out reports and schedules and keep other grade three teachers on track- meet deadlines. I also had to make sure that all assessment for the term was put together and kept in the office* (p.1)”.

TLC believed in having a sense of values.

4.2.3.1 Enactment of leadership by TLC: a personal profile.

TLC’s profile in terms of the observation schedule of Harris & Lambert (2003) begins with her *adult development* which places her where she engaged colleagues in acting out of a sense of self and shared values, forming interdependent learning communities: “*So I think it’s important to keep abreast of new developments and also with networking with other teachers, or even just talking to them, you pick up different ideas...*” (II, p. 1). She engaged in self reflection as a

means of improving practices: *“It’s not nice to say oh you know, they new. They don’t know anything. I believe you can learn from anybody”* (II, p.1). TLC also modeled these practices for others in the community and, in addition, she held conversations that shared views and developed understanding of each other’s assumptions: *“TLC was involved in discussion with her head of department (HOD) about how we should best tackle the national tests. She volunteered to co-ordinate the running of the tests”* (OS, p. 2). She was highly self-evaluative and introspective and shared responsibility as a natural part of a school community: *“...he (a learner) was actually dyslexic and every time they sent him to Gandhi Road, they sent him back and said no he will come right. But no, I worked with him. There was a limit to what I could do”* (II, p.3). TLC saw no need for blame. I observed that she consistently showed respect and concern for all members of the school community and she also validated and respected qualities in and opinions of others *“TLC meets with parents in her classroom to discuss individual learner progress. She has not had any complaints registered against her by any parents”* (OS, p.6). Her respect for people went beyond the confines of the school: *“I deal with people and their problems and I do voluntary hairdressing. I do all the old people. I cut their hair, but it’s sad to see the old people, you know their kids don’t care anymore”* (II, p. 3).

According to the model TLC communicated effective dialogue among members of the school community in order to build relationships and to focus dialogue on teaching and learning. She facilitated communication among colleagues by asking provocative questions which opened productive dialogue (OS, p.3). TLC possessed current knowledge and information about teaching and learning. In addition, she sought to use that understanding to alter teaching practices *“we do share notes and compare strategies* (II, p.3)”. She also studied her own practices *“at the end of the day, our main focus, I should say you know, I got through to this child* (II, p.3)”. TLC promoted an open mind and flexibility in others. With regard to *collaboration*, she eagerly participated in shared decision-making and volunteered to follow through on group decisions. TLC was an active participant in team building and she sought roles and opportunities to contribute to the work of the team. She also saw ‘teamness’ as central to the community. This participant acknowledged that all problems involved all members of the community and she tried to define problems and proposed resolutions or approaches which addressed the situation *“I deal with people and their problems. If their children are battling with something, they come and say please ma’m can you help me here?”* (II, p.3)”. TLC mentioned in a conversation with me as well

as earlier in an individual interview that “*she was assisting a community member whose child had a learning disability*” (OS, p. 5). This display of compassion was listed as a prerequisite for teacher leaders in the following response: “*They facilitate, motivate and correct, show kindness*” (TLS, A5, p.4). She also found that blame was not relevant. As far as conflict was concerned, she “*anticipated and sought to resolve or intervened in conflict* (JE, p.4)”. In addition, she actively tried to channel conflict into problem-solving endeavours. She was not intimidated by conflict but would not deliberately seek it: *Despite a contentious issue involving the sharing of teacher portfolio materials, TLC has kept her calm and has not been drawn into taking sides on the issue*” (OS, p.2).

In terms of *organizational change* and in terms of the rubric, she provided for and created opportunities to engage others in forward (visionary leadership) thinking and planning based on common core values “*TLC has planned excursions for the previous term*” (JE, p.7). She is coordinated the assessments and “*held meetings with her colleagues to synchronise the assessments with the preparations of lessons for the term*” (OS, Nov. 18, p.4). TLC showed enthusiasm and involvement in school change and commented about job satisfaction “*I love school. My husband thinks I’m mad. Honestly, he says he cannot understand how somebody can enjoy what they do. I really enjoy what I do. I love....I love I love teaching*” (II, p.5). She led by example and explored possibilities: “*TLC has secured sponsorship of fruit for the learners. The school has a feeding scheme which is run by the Department of Education but TLC has seen the need to supplement that with fresh fruit*” (OS, p.3). She also implemented changes for both personal and professional development. TLC developed an appreciation of own cultural identities and a deeper appreciation and respect for cultural differences. She applied this understanding in the classroom and school. As a consequence collaborated with, supported and gave feedback to new and student teachers.

4.2.3.2 The enactment of leadership by TLC: a zones and roles analysis.

TLC was active in the different zones and roles and here I discuss her performance. In zone one (in the classroom) and within role one (continuing to teach and improve one’s own teaching in

the classroom), TLC kept abreast of new developments as she “*attended workshops and was studying further (IQMS, PS, 5a)*”. She maintained “*effective classroom discipline and demonstrated a pastoral care role (IQMS, PS, 1c)*”. She was “*autonomous in her classroom in terms of decision-making and made changes happen in the classroom to the benefit of the learners*” (OS, p.4).

Within zone two (working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom) and within role two (providing curriculum development knowledge in the school), TLC “*adopted a mentoring role to teacher leaders and built skills and confidence in others (IQMS, PS, 5d)*”. She “*worked with integrity and trust and was transparent in her actions (OS, p. 3)*”. In role four (participation of performance evaluation of teachers) she “*was involved in IQMS activities such as peer assessment and the moderation of peer assessment tasks*” (OS, p.5).

TLC enacted teacher leadership in zone three (outside the classroom in whole school development) and assumed role five (organizing and leading peer reviews of school practice). She “*worked at fundraising and professional development initiatives (OS, p.4)*”. In addition, within zone three and in role six (participating in school level decision-making), she “*engaged in participative leadership where teachers felt that they were part of the change and had sense of ownership (IQMS, PS, 5d)*”. TLC could “*identify problems and resolve them (JE, p.3)*”. TLC said in her individual interview: “*I like taking charge of situations...* ” (p.1). With regards to zone four (between neighbouring schools in the community) and in role two (providing curriculum development knowledge across schools in the community), she “*liaised with and met with parents or wrote to them to discuss their children’s progress (OS, p.5)*”. In role three of the zone (leading in-service education and assisting other teachers) she: “*forged close relationships and built a rapport with individual teachers through which mutual learning took place (IQMS, PS, 5d)*”. She “*adopted the role of mentoring of teacher leaders and developed confidence in others (IQMS, PS, 5d)*”. TLC: *worked with integrity, trust and transparency*” (OS, p.6).

Having presented the profile of each teacher leader and having discussed the enactment of teacher leadership, I will now give the reader an insight into the mutual qualities that the teacher leaders exhibited in terms of how they enacted teacher leadership in the school.

4.3 THE ENACTMENT OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP: COMMON THEMES

From across the data sets it emerged that the teacher leaders displayed common qualities towards people that they came into contact with. The data also revealed the qualities that were shared by these teacher leaders such as the intense interest shown in children and the challenges of working with children that enjoyed many freedoms, but children who sometimes did not share the teacher leaders' enthusiasm to strive for excellence. They were compassionate and demonstrated empathy towards others. In addition, the three teacher leaders were keen, hard-working and they engaged in purposeful teaching. Despite their hectic schedules, they still found the time to attend workshops. They planned their work and kept up to date with new developments in teaching. The respondents found enjoyment in what they did and welcomed opportunities to take charge as they felt that they could convince people to act in their own interest in order to benefit.

In the following section I document the common enactment of teacher leadership according to *zones* and *roles*.

4.4 THE ENACTMENT OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP ACCORDING TO THE ZONES

The data showed that teacher leadership was practiced within the different zones as suggested by Grant (2008). The diagram (Appendix 5) used by Grant (2008) is a graphical representation of the zones that teacher leaders operate in and the roles that they play with regards to teaching. It helped to analyse and contextualize the data in my study. According to the zones and roles model, teacher leadership was enacted within the classroom (*Zone One*), outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities by working with other teachers and learners (*Zone Two*), between schools where teacher leaders interacted with other teachers (*Zone Three*), and outside the classroom and school, but within the community networking across schools (*Zone Four*).

The teacher leaders' responses recorded in interviews and captured in journal entries, revealed themes based on the perceptions of the teacher leaders. I interpreted these themes through the

lens of theories such as distributed leadership (Gunter, 2005) and transformational leadership (Sergiovanni, 1990). In addition teacher leaders were observed at work, and the data that was gathered from these observations, helped to build up a mosaic or portrait of the teacher leaders who were the principal sources of data on teacher leaders in the school. I also used survey data to paint a broad picture of teacher leadership enactment in the school in general. The data revealed a broad spectrum of teacher leadership activity in the context of the zones and roles model.

In the following section I looked at data that gave an insight into teacher leadership practice in zone one.

4.4.1 Teacher leadership enactment in the classroom: common themes.

Teachers in the case study school felt very strongly that leadership was not restricted to the school office, but was enacted in various places with the zone of the classroom (zone one). A secondary participant wrote on her survey questionnaire: *“teacher leadership involves the role of the teacher in the classroom with learners and outside the classroom where the teacher interacts with other learners and other educators. It involves the teacher’s involvement in community issues where the teacher interacts with parents”* (TLS, A4, p.4). This quotation illustrates the view that teacher leaders should not only be leaders in their classrooms but also lead as they interact with colleagues, in the zone of working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom, in curricular and extra-curricular activities (zone two) as well as with parents and community members (i.e. across all four zones). TLC added that teachers should be given a chance to make decisions and children too must be encouraged to practice decision-making: *“I have leaders, my children, I have leaders in my class as well that make decisions”* (II, p. 2). This teacher leader felt that decision-making opportunities encourage leadership in children. In addition, she felt that decision-making also teaches actions and consequences: *“I tell them, the*

ball is in your court, you behaved badly, now you decide what we should do to make this right” (II p.2).

Within zone one, this enactment of teacher leadership was observed by me when TLB was given a new class to establish in a grade that she was not trained for. She tackled the task enthusiastically, getting family to help her with resources and even coming in on weekends to set out her teaching space. TLB reflected on the lack of resources or lack of support from the school, yet she also demonstrated her course of action as a teacher leader, in the following quote:

No! I think we do have good resources, but I think we should have better resources. Can I talk about children or for myself? As a teacher, we need more resources. When I got into grade one, I had nothing and I had to build it up on my own and I complained about it and I still didn't get anything. So eventually I had to build my own resources, and I'm still building on it at the moment... (II, p.2).

The participants acknowledged the positive role that was played by the school and the manner in which it encouraged teacher leadership in the zone of the classroom. TLA felt that *“the school is doing more than it should”* (II, p.5). As far as resources were concerned, TLB said: *“I think we do have good resources...”* (II, p.2). TLC added: *“but definitely we are privileged here because I mean, you know, worksheets, there's no problem with it...teaching materials we fine...”* (II, p.5). TLC also said in the focus group interview, in terms of resources: *“and you don't have to come and talk to the management about it”* (p. 1). I observed how TLC set about getting organized when she was shifted to another room, a newly built classroom, because the school began to operate grade R classes for the first time, at the beginning of the second term. Her classroom doubled up as a store room before she moved in. The benches were stacked to the ceiling and to my question on how she felt about the inconvenience, she sportingly said: *“I wanted to kill somebody for that! When these tables and all were there, the class was very cramped. It was very, very cramped!”*(II, p.2). She continued to teach whilst getting her classroom to be at an acceptable physical standard. In a very short space of time her classroom was the picture of productivity. The quality of teacher leadership that emerged from my observations and other data was that the teacher leaders got things done or did what they had to do, without bemoaning the fact that there were obstacles in their way. They were agents of change. They engaged in

professional development initiatives. They initiated changes to ensure that they could get their core work done.

The three teacher leaders enjoyed autonomy in their classrooms and were empowered. According to Gunter (2005, p.52), “when teachers are empowered then it means they are licensed to deliver in ways that recognize some discretion as long as the overall goals are achieved or exceeded”. TLC put it in perspective by expressing the following view: *“In your class you have to be a leader, every teacher has to be a leader. You get to give children, as TLB said, direction. So definitely you’re the leader in the class”* (FGI p.1). TLC elaborated further on the extent of her autonomy in the classroom:

Ok, like if there’s an assessment that your grade is doing, there is an assessment, you say by a certain date it must be done. If your children have not reached or are not ready for that assessment yet, you can on your own set a date a little further back so that you know when learners are ready for it, and then do the assessment and you don’t have to come and talk to management about it (FGI p.1).

When asked whether teacher leadership was allowed to happen in her class, TLB replied: *“Yes, I can, in every way. I feel that I’m a leader in my classroom, unless I give a specific person at that time authority to do whatever they need to in class”*(II, p.1).

In response to a question on whether we could win back the children in terms of getting them into a culture of learning, the teacher leaders believed that we were making progress with the children. They were unanimous in their view that they were getting through to their learners and TLC was emphatic about it as she exclaimed: *“Winning back children? Yes!”*(II, p.3). In contrast, I noted a level of disillusionment in one teacher leader’s comment: *“sometimes it is ... I feel frustrated ...cause I feel we do so much, as a lead teacher in your classroom, but somehow its just (laughter) like when we have this problem in our classroom that’s why I say frustration, we try so many things to get through to the learner ... but sometimes it’s a limitation that causes frustration”* (FGI, p. 4). The teacher leaders felt that educators should treat our children fairly when they were given responsibilities. TLA shared the following view: *“Holding the children’s future is a burden for me that I’m tired of carrying. Children should be proud of their work. Children should work in the classroom”* (II, p.5). However TLA added that there were times that

the learners surprised them by performing well: *“I simply have a good day when they are working with me”* (II, p.5). TLC declared that she learned from children and that the learners felt happy when they were given the opportunity to teach something. *“They feel a little better They can teach something”* (II, p. 1).

In a show of the potential that teachers have, one teacher affirmed that she had identified the need for a pre-school and did feasibility exercises. The long-term vision that the teacher demonstrated was not far off the mark of the DOE’s intention to establish grade R classes at all primary schools. The case study school has since started grade R classes of which there are two units. Another response from a teacher who participated in the survey was that she was involved in *“leadership in a holiday program”* (TLS, A8, p.4.) Most respondents claimed to have been involved in *“activities to celebrate Human Rights Day* (JE, p.4)”. According to the responses to open-ended questions in the survey, a significant number of the teachers had *“organized sports trips. Excursions, fun days, graduations and market days”* (TLS, A3, p.4). This was evidence that teacher leadership was enacted within the zones of the classroom and beyond.

I now reflect on common themes that emerged in zone two.

4.4.2 Leading teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities: common themes.

Teacher leaders had differing views on interacting with other educators outside the classroom curricular and extra-curricular issues. Teacher leaders felt that they were the principal players in the group. An educator responded in the survey that teacher leaders *“were able to work with others, lead by example and were role models to learners and colleagues”* (TLS, A16. P.4). This was very much like the view by Harris and Spillane (2008, p.32) that a distributed view of leadership *“incorporates the activities of multiple groups of individuals in a school who work at guiding and mobilizing staff in the instructional change process”*. Teacher leaders indicated that they operated within *zone two* whilst fulfilling *role one*, that is, continuing to teach and improve one’s own teaching. TLB commented: *“...and I’m always interacting with other teachers and*

finding better ways of... of improving my teaching, besides the study” (II, p.1). This comment also illustrated an emergent form of teacher leadership similar to that which Gronn (2000) describes as an “an emergent property of a group or network of individuals, in which group members pool their expertise.” TLC commented about her further studies:

er... I started with the technology, doing it because it was, it was something to look forward to for my NPDE (National Professional Diploma in Education) and we not offering much else, but as I started working with it and understand it, the level that we do technology in grade three class is totally different from the level that is expected and the method of teaching technology is totally different as well (II, p.4).

In contrast TLA believed that her interaction with other teachers was restricted. She explained: *You see here, I feel like I’m working in isolation... compared to when I worked at my previous school. We used to share ideas, but here I feel a bit isolated...*” (FGI, p.3). They engaged in informal discussions and shared ideas, likes and dislikes, whilst also comparing notes about common problems. TLA expressed the following opinion: *“I feel a lot of teachers come to us for advice. I’ve been in a lot of situations where teachers ask us what we do at our school... that will better their school with regards to curriculum, with regard to a lot of other stuff”* (FGI, p.3). Other descriptions of teacher leaders from survey data included the view that teacher leaders had *“skills of mentoring, had the skills to implement the curriculum, went the extra mile and influenced others”* (TLS, p.4). In support of the view from teacher leaders Sledge and Moorhead (2005, p. 5) claim that “teacher leaders help colleagues achieve success for all students in the school. They accept more responsibility beyond their individual classrooms and focus on change for the entire school programme”. In addition Sledge and Moorhead (2005, p.5) also maintain that “the qualities for teacher leadership include interpersonal skills that build trusting, communicative and collaborative relationships with teachers”. TLA added in her journal *“Mrs. L. really helped me learn the ropes. At least next year I would be able to do more on my own!”* (p.10). The primary participants compared notes and strategies and networked with other schools. A few teachers stated in the survey that they worked as subject heads and one such response was *“Yes, I’m a subject head. I do the planning and filter it down to the teachers”* (TLS, A7, p.4). These activities are located within Zone Two of the model of leadership. This

showed that teachers practiced in *zone two* of the *model*. Similarly, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p.12), refer to Paulu & Winters (1998), who feel that “teacher leaders can provide critically needed support to beginning teachers, to those who are teaching a different subject area or to experienced teachers who are new to the school”.

When asked whether they discussed the management of the school critically, TLA responded “... *you know when you sitting and socializing with friends or just having a conversation, that’s when it comes up*” (FGI, p.3). The data revealed that these interactions of the teacher leaders with their colleagues came with certain challenges. TLA expressed a view: “*You see here, I feel like I’m working in isolation ... compared to when I worked at my previous school. We used to share ideas, but here I feel a bit isolated*” (FGI, p.3). According to Muijs and Harris (2007), previous literature suggests that there is a need to build capacity among teachers so that they gain the self-confidence to act as leaders in their own schools. Whilst TLC expressed reservations about whether she was accepted by other teachers in the role of leader, she acknowledged that teachers had been given the opportunity to lead:

I don’t know, within the grade three’s its fine. We’ve all been given a chance to exercise our leadership skills. I’m not sure across the other grades. Well I’m hoping to test those waters next year, because I’m going to try to push a bit for technology grade R , the way I’ve been learning it, I’m not sure, I’ll see next year when I’m better equipped to deal with it (II, p.4).

Within zone two teacher leaders were asked whether they had opportunities where they evaluated each other (role four). TLC answered: “*Ya, a lot of times, especially in the foundation phase, most of the time in your class*” (FGI, p.2). I sensed teachers’ unease when they were responding to a question on the part that they played in *role four* of *zone two*, namely, their participation in performance evaluation of teachers. Although the teachers evaluated their peers, the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) tool was not popular with the teachers and there were difficulties in implementing it. An interesting comment on the Integrated Quality Management Systems was made by one of the respondents. TLA remarked “*Can I talk now? I feel that you know, as a teacher, if you say I got a two in something or I got to improve, I don’t mind; as long as you tell me how I can improve you know...*” (FGI, p. 2). The comment raised some issues on the assessment of teachers (role four- participating in the performance evaluation

of teachers) in general and the assessment of teacher leaders in particular. One issue is that teachers submitted a personal growth plan but the above comment suggested that there was no follow up to that plan in terms of improving the teacher's skills. A second issue that was raised by the comment is the inference that peers evaluated each other from a biased position and just went through the motions. If that was the case, then the quality of the teacher leadership was compromised. This comment ties in with the stance of De Clercq (2008 p.11), that: "professional monitoring or accountability, which refers to professional teachers evaluating their colleagues' work, encourages teachers to share and reflect together (often on-site) on ways of improving practices". The following comment by TLA illustrated that there was much debate on just one of the issues, namely, evaluation of teachers:

I feel IQMS is there for a guide, now I get the impression that some people feel that my buddy is gonna be there, so my buddy must give me a good mark. To them IQMS is like, it's just to get through and it's about getting an improvement, so that's why I feel that IQMS ... even when I go and sit in a lesson I'm doing it, I'm not giving a bad mark. I don't like you, I feel that if I can help you in that area, why not?...and if you need the improvement and help...why not? (FGI p.3).

Teacher leadership practice also prevailed in zone three, which is outside the classroom and in whole school development, as is discussed in the section that follows.

4.4.3 Teacher leadership enactment outside the classroom in the area of whole school development: common themes.

In this zone of the model, teachers operate as leaders outside the classroom, in whole school development. Here they can play a role in organizing and leading peer reviews of school practice (role five), and participating in school level decision-making (role six). In the context of the case study school, when the DoE gave the directive that a National Test be done to gauge the standard of our education, TLC wrote in her journal: *"I then decided that it would be a good idea to have*

a trial test before the 'real test'. I discussed this matter with the HOD and teachers from grade three. Once all consulted were agreeable, I went about setting the trial test" (JE, p.2).

According to the data in the study, teacher leadership enactment took place outside the classroom in whole school development. Such school development included an intervention program to improve learner performance. The rationale for the interventions was borne out of concern that the learners performed very poorly in the core areas of literacy and numeracy. The principal of the school intervened to raise the level of competence of the learners. The intervention strategy proposed was to temporarily suspend the teaching of the other learning areas and to engage all the teachers in teaching numeracy and literacy. Learners were given intense instruction in literacy and numeracy. It was a demonstration of a distributed perspective on leadership. Spillane (2006, p.13) point out that "from a distributed perspective, leadership is more than what individuals in formal leadership positions do. People in formal and informal roles take responsibility for leadership activities". The respondents were unanimous in the view that teacher leaders took charge and gave direction and ensured that tasks were executed properly. This was epitomized by the following comment made by respondent TLC when asked what she thought an outstanding quality of a teacher leader was. She replied: *"Someone that takes the initiative.... to do something, without being said,... to attack something without being told to do"*(FGI, p.1). A similar comment was made by TLB when asked what qualities a teacher leader should have: *"Someone who gives you direction, someone who takes charge, yes in control"* (FGI, p.1). The teacher leaders felt that the interventions benefited the children. Teacher leaders showed ownership of the initiative which was mooted by the school principal and helped to drive the process. They encouraged other teachers to make the interventions successful by their positive actions and endorsement of management's short-term goal. Another response from a teacher who completed the survey simply stated that: *"they delegate duties and ensure that duties are carried out successfully without unnecessary interference"* (TLS, A2. P.4). This comment demonstrated a form of emergent leadership. TLA felt that the efforts of the school needed additional support: *"No, it's not enough. You know, I feel that the school is doing more than it should. I feel that if the parents took time to do the work at home with the learners, they (the learners) would pass* (II, p.5). Two teacher leaders were of the opinion that the national tests were worthwhile although the language was too difficult for the children. They also felt that the tests did not suit the school conditions or context. In line with this, TLB said that *"national tests*

do not meet our standards or criteria, our own way of teaching” (II, p.3). TLC responded: *“I felt that last year, when we did the national tests, the grade one children were able to manage it, but some of the language had words that the children had not seen much of before...”* (II, p.4). In order to meet the challenges presented by the national tests, the teacher leaders simplified the language that was used in the tests.

The responses from the participants included various suggestions to improve the quality of the service that the school provided. There was a general perception amongst the respondents that the parents needed to help to improve the children’s performance. In my view, the three teacher leaders concerned themselves with issues that would normally fall within the ambit of formal leadership. They were change agents and therefore promoted teacher leadership. However TLB expressed a contrasting view that the school needed to do more for the children: *“More playgrounds are needed or improve the playgrounds”* (II, p.2). TLB added that: *“We need more resources. We need more resources for teachers and children”*. TLB felt that *“children don’t have enough things to play with”* (II, p.2). In addition the respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the manner in which the time table was structured at the school. TLA suggested the following *“Change the times at school. Make periods longer. Create more time for homework by making the day shorter. Intensify work in the classroom”* (II, p.6).

TLA wrote in her journal *“I also take a lead role among the grade five educators, to decorate the Quad. every time it is our turn”* (p.4). However it also became clear from the responses of the teacher leaders that their decision-making opportunities were tempered by autocratic tendencies of the school’s management structure. TLC made a comment that illustrates the point: *“I think what limits... I think a lot of us, is that we not part of decision-making and in that way there’s things that you want to do but you can’t because (hesitation)”* (II, p.5). In a similar vein, TLA commented: *“... but the thing is , sometimes if management have set their minds on doing it...”* (FGI, p.3). TLB interjected: *“Yes, yes, it’s this way... no matter what we as a staff say, it’s going to be done the way management wants it done”* (FGI, p.3). Spillane, Halverson and Diamond (2004, p.26) contend that sometimes the organization in a school inhibits the teachers’ opportunities to interact with colleagues. According to them *“a distributed perspective presses us to consider organizational structures as more than vessels for leadership activity , and more than accessories that leaders can use to execute a particular task using some pre-determined strategy*

or practice” (p.26). The teacher leaders were in favour of making decisions in consultation with other members of staff and with the heads of department. This was in line with the view of Clemson-Ingram and Fessler (1997), who warn that the traditional model of top-down management where teachers are at the bottom and the principal at the top is outdated and not effective. The evidence pointed to a desire among the participants for a shared decision-making approach in the delivery of education in the school. One of the respondents, TLC, rejected the idea of one person making all the decisions and felt that the principal needed to rely on his managers or groups of people:

I don't er ... ok, it's good in that maybe there's more direction, but also if everybody puts in a little bit of their idea , I think we all, like I said before , we all can learn from each other and one person may not know everything and may not know how to handle a situation and if you have your management there to assist you , you can go to them and say you know , have a different view , and maybe you , sir, have a different view of handling it, and the person you are talking to may adapt better to your stance on it...(II, p.1).

However TLC later seemed to contradict herself when she said “so I think , for a school to be effective , decisions should be taken by management ... even teachers sometimes should be given a chance to have an input and to have their say on how things should be done (II, p.1) TLB had a similar view:

I believe in one person running the school, but not making all the decisions. We should have a head in our school. Are you talking about something like that? But I believe also there should be a group of teachers assisting the one person with the decision making, because the one person does not really know everything that's going on around the school (II, p.2).

What appeared to be a contradiction in the participants' comments actually revealed the invidious position that teacher leaders found themselves in. It was a combination of the tendency to accept top-down decision making, due to traditional influences of a bureaucratic history of apartheid education, and the urge to share their decision making-skills, despite the fact that they did not hold formal positions in management. The teacher leaders showed deference to the

leadership of the principal and felt that decision-making by him was necessary at times because not all decisions could be arrived at democratically. The above comments reveal that the teacher leaders actually accepted a blend of democratic and autocratic practice in a school. The above comments also acknowledge the autocratic approach of the SMT, in decision-making where the school sought direction on school-related issues, but recognized the need for consultation with other members of staff. This was much like the observation by Thurlow, Bush & Coleman (2003), that a more sophisticated analysis other than the authoritarian/democratic division is required. TLA reacted to the issue of one person running the school and making all the decisions by declaring support for a democratic decision making approach to the running of the school:

Doesn't work. I feel . . . erm, the school's like a business. Number one, for the business to be successful, it takes a group of teachers to make it work. He's got to rely on his managers, the managers rely on the workers and if the workers are not happy, it affects the whole chain. So you can't be a Zimbabwean for a school... where one person dictates what is happening. You got to be a group of people working together to make everything work out. You know I don't know what you want unless you tell me and if I don't feel I want to do it, or I don't feel I'm capable of doing it ... I should say so. Now if you just going to tell me to do, do, do, and you don't know what my abilities are ... then its not going to workout (II, p.4).

TLC believed that one person should run the school with the proviso that not all the decisions be made by the principal and she explained “*Ok it's good in that maybe there's more direction, but also if everybody puts in a little bit of their idea...*” (II, p.1). According to TLA, all school managers are not appointed for their leadership skills. She was referring here to people who attained formal management positions by default or by circumstances: “*... because all leaders are not chosen for their leadership skills... all leaders are not good leaders*” (II, p. 5).

The data clarified a perceived power struggle between teacher leaders and management in the hierarchical environment of the school. The three teacher leaders revealed, by their responses to questions, that they were human and that they experienced various intense emotions during their interactions with colleagues, parents, children and members of the SMT. TLC wrote the following comment in a journal entry which suggested that the teacher leader was considerate, cautious and tactful: “*I felt apprehensive initially, because I did not know how my HOD and*

peers (colleagues) were going to react to my suggestion” (JE, p.2). TLC voiced an opinion that was likened to that of Gunter (2005), in whose view “grafting distributed leadership onto educational organizations that are unitary and hierarchical means that those that are directly accountable, and hence face removal/resignation, may find it too risky to engage in distributed leadership” (p.50). However teacher leaders’ responses did not indicate a desire to usurp leadership. In fact they showed a respect for formal leadership and this is captured by the response from TLC who said: *“I did not want anyone to feel that I was undermining them or taking over”* (JE, p. 2).

Teacher leaders were unanimous in the view that one person cannot know everything. This was in line with the thinking of Hart (1995, p. 10), who argues that there are many leadership models that challenge the idea of the principal as *the* visionary leader of the school. The participants pointed out that, academically, many people had different ideas. TLC offered the following position: *“Like I said before, we all can learn from each other and one person may not know everything and may not know how to handle a situation and if you have management there to assist you, you can go to them and say, you know, have a different view”* (II, p.1). TLA shared ideas, socialized and discussed problems with other teachers demonstrating activity within zone four: *“When I meet teachers from my old school, ex school, problems that they experiencing, and someone to talk to... it’s informal but then you get something out of it.”* TLB interacted with other teachers, out of class, with other schools, in sport: *“I’m always interacting with other teachers ...”* (II, P.1). She continued: *“I interact with other teachers from our school, out of class, when we have a social gathering, and then I interact with other teachers as well, like when I taught at School X I always interacted with other teachers with sport and socially ”* (II p2). She discussed likes and dislikes and spoke with parents and children: *“... also with my children and a lot of other children and speaking to a lot of parents...”* (II, p. 2).

4.4.4 Teacher leadership beyond the school into the community: common themes.

Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p.17) say that: “teachers, who are leaders, lead within and beyond the classroom, identify with and contribute to a community of teacher learners and

leaders and influence others towards improved educational practices.” As an example of this practice, TLB expressed the following view: *“I feel that a lot of teachers come to us, at school for advice. I’ve been in a lot of situations where teachers ask us what we do at our school that will better their school with regards to curriculum, with regards to a lot of stuff”*(FGI, p.3).

The primary participants also interacted with other teacher, for example, TLC networked with other teachers and learnt new ideas from children, friends as well as family that were teachers and this was supported by the following remark: *“I do interact with a lot of people and a lot of children, parents....”* She added: *“I have a lot of family that are teachers in other schools as well, so we do share notes and compare strategies on how to deal with this...”* (II, p. 3). Sought help from others: *“like I have a good friend at School Y and if there’s anything I’m battling with I contact her and ask how do I deal with this, and we talk and she helps me”* (II, p. 3).

TLA made a comment that would be relevant to zone four of the model:

There are teachers that I socialize with. We sit and we’ll talk about problems, my friend Danielle, she’s also in primary school. She’ll tell me what they doing and I’ll tell what I do and that’s where I get some of my ideas and how I improve....I mean she’s a new teacher but that doesn’t mean she hasn’t got ideas that can help me, and then I will help her ... she’s busy with assignments, I did that a lot, especially when I was in Estcourt on lesson planning and it’s just an interaction in that way and discussions of problems and things like that especially when I meet teachers from my old school, problems that they experiencing, it’s informal but then you get something out of it...(II, p.2).

TLC shared the following insight on how she practiced (zone four) interacting with other teachers:

Yes, I do, other teachers yes, I have lots of friends and like my old school, we still meet. We still go out and ... I have a lot of family that are teachers in other schools as well, so we do share notes and compare strategies on how to deal with this. Like I have a very good friend at school Z and if there’s anything I’m battling with, I contact her and ask how do I deal with this, and we talk and she helps me (II, p.3).

TLA wrote in a journal entry: *“I was a coordinator of the Cuppa for Cansa community function in the school. Although I was ‘new’ teacher I grabbed the opportunity with both hands. Hopefully I did an o.k. job!”*

When asked about her role in providing curriculum development knowledge in roles two and three of zone four of the model, TLA said, *“I’d like to think of myself as a teacher leader, I mean I like to encourage others to further better themselves”* (II, p.1). She continued: *“Well I’m enrolled at Edgewood for an ACE professional development course... every chance there’s a workshop, I’m there, so I think it’s important to keep abreast of new developments and also with networking with other teachers or even just talking to them, you pick up the different ideas...”* (II, p.1). In addition TLA said: *“when I meet teachers from my ex school, problems that they experiencing, and someone to talk to...it’s informal but then you get something out of it...”* (II, p. 2). TLB added the following comment during the focus group interview: *“I’ve been in a lot of situations where teachers ask us what we do at our school... that will better their school with regards to curriculum...”* (FGI, p.3). The interactions of teacher leaders that are evident in these quotes highlight an important feature of a distributed perspective on leadership, namely, “leadership practice is generated in the *interactions* of leaders, followers, and their situation; each element is essential for leadership practice” (Spillane, 2006, p.4).

The three teacher leaders were asked to talk about themselves. Some themes that emerged were that the teacher leaders interacted with members of staff and with other people outside school, for example during sporting and social gathering. In this way they got new ideas and their teaching experiences grew everyday. TLB wrote in her journal: *“I spoke to other teachers at other schools...”* (p.2). This quote illustrates the view that “in schools, the learning community is demonstrated by people from multiple constituencies, at all levels, collaboratively and continually working together” (Louis and Kruse 1995), cited in Harris and Muijs (2005, p. 51). In my opinion communication amongst teachers should be facilitated and encouraged by the school as it promotes teacher leadership. According to Spillane (2004, p. 22), “organisational arrangements that inhibit communication among teachers might constrain leadership practice for instructional innovation”. Teacher leaders believed in encouraging others to better themselves and they led by example, for example by furthering their studies. They cared for others because they were helpful and considerate, they were not presumptuous and did not regard themselves as

being superior. According to information that surfaced across interviews, the teacher leaders also spoke to parents about education issues, an example of teacher leadership. TLA revealed that she worked with the parents: *“the parents sat and I made sure that the work was signed. The parents had to make sure that they did their sums and they learnt their time tables”* (II, p.6).

In this section I took the reader through data which captured the three participants’ common views and experiences on teacher leadership enactment in the case study school. The data revealed how teacher leadership was enacted in the school within the four zones and identified the roles that teacher leaders played in each of the zones. The evidence also informed the reader about the extent to which teacher leadership was promoted in the school and gave insight into factors that were considered to be barriers to the practice of teacher leadership.

4.5 THE BENEFITS OF THE ENACTMENT OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP

In this section I discuss the benefits of the enactment of teacher leadership such as a collaborative learning environment, collegiality and the sharing of work which creates opportunities for teacher leadership.

4.5.1 Shared decision-making.

The open – ended responses to questions from teachers revealed that there were benefits to be gained for the school from the efforts of teacher leaders. Many teachers felt that freedom of expression would result in happy teachers who would, in turn, be more eager and happy to work in the school. They felt that teacher leadership came with decision-making freedom and that the teachers’ sense of self worth would be enhanced *“teachers become part of the decision-making within the school thereby creating a pleasant environment for teachers to work in”* (TLS, A10,

p.4). A participant in the survey wrote that “*educators are allowed to use their own initiative when performing tasks. They feel that they are valued*” (TLS, A6, p.4). Another response was “*decentralization of power. All educators are given the opportunity to lead in various areas*” (TLS, A4 p.4). In addition teacher leadership brought with it a positive attitude towards daily tasks where power would be distributed. In the words of Gunter (2005, p.5), “power is formally located in the position of being a teacher with a job description and cultural expectations of what a teacher is or should be, and it is in the doing of teacherly activity and actions that power is exercised”.

In their responses teachers also expressed the opinion that the teaching and learning environment would be enhanced because the self esteem of teachers was realized or reinforced. According to the responses there would be better relationships between teachers and learners leading to achievement of the school’s core business: “*teacher to teacher and teacher to pupil interaction is enhanced*” (TLS, A4, p. 4). In addition the responses indicated that the school’s relationship with the community would be enhanced if teacher leadership was encouraged. According to the data, teacher leadership would promote a sense of ownership of the school. Hidden qualities in teachers would surface because they would be free to practice. The teachers felt that effective teacher leadership would lead to better running and functioning of the school. This response captured the sentiment, “*the benefits are that teachers become part of decision making within the school, thereby creating a pleasant environment for teachers to work in. It also gives teachers the opportunity to gain some leadership skills and to get in involved with some of the management tasks*” (TLS, A10, p.4).

Teacher leadership practice very often called for delegation of duties because of the demanding workload. However delegation of duty presents its own challenges.

4.5.2 A collaborative learning environment.

There were some interesting responses from the participants in the study to questions that probed what the factors were that boosted teacher leadership practice in our school. The participants

appreciated a transparent leadership style. TLC wrote in her journal: *“The acting principal is very conscious about his staff and is always letting his staff know about what is happening at the school”* (JE, p.1). She continued in the entry: *“There is definitely a culture of teaching and learning present at all times. Teachers work hard to give of their best to the learners”* (JE, p. 1). In my opinion this view represents a suitable environment for teacher leadership to flourish because the core business of the school is functioning smoothly and freeing up leaders to lead rather than to be bogged down by ‘damage control’ activities. TLA wrote in her journal: *“I’m currently teaching in a school that, considering its size and property, has quite a number of resources for the learners. They cater for all types of learners not only the academic”* (p.3). TLC added in her journal that: *“the photocopy and running out policy of the school is great because it makes a wider spectrum of lessons available to the learners/teachers”* (JE, p.1).

There was a sense of collegiality in the school which encouraged teacher leaders to strive for excellence. TLC wrote in her journal: *“my colleagues and HOD however responded positively and were willing to jump on board and assist where needed. Their response made me feel good because it showed their faith in me and I felt worth something. I felt that my colleagues had confidence in me and my ability”* (JE, p. 4). TLA reflected on the encouragement that she enjoyed from her SMT: *“my SMT accepted my leadership and haven’t yet questioned me about my leadership! So to see people happy with my suggestions made me feel quite good with myself”* (JE, p.18). This supportive nature of the staff augured well for teacher leadership enactment in the school. The way work was shared or distributed in the school also created opportunities for teacher leadership. According to Grant (2008), at the heart of the distributed leadership model is its inclusive approach to leadership and its promotion of capacity building. TLC wrote the following entry in her journal which illustrates the point: *“The grade three educators have a system whereby each educator is allocated a term to do planning (prep), assessment, excursions etc”* (p.7).

Delegating duties is an onerous task but it shapes leadership. I discuss delegation in the next section.

4.5.3 Delegation of duties from an informal position.

Teacher leaders were asked to give their views on the delegation of duties to colleagues and how they managed this practice. They believed in the delegation of duties. TLB said: *“yes....unless I give a specific person authority....in every way I’m a leader in my class. Delegation is not a problem”* (II p. 1). This comment suggested a belief in an authorized distributed leadership framing. TLA believed in giving responsibilities to those that were best suited for the job and had the potential: *“I firmly believe in giving duty to someone who has that ability”* (II, p.3). In addition this teacher leader also preferred to delegate to those people who had the most influence or the most connections. This best illustrated the view of Harris and Muijs (2005, p. 28) who explain that “distributed leadership concentrates on engaging expertise where it exists in the organisation rather than seeking this only through formal position or role”.

Having discussed enhancing factors, I now move on to discuss barriers to teacher leadership experienced at the case study school.

4.6 BARRIERS TO TEACHER LEADERSHIP

In this section I discuss barriers to teacher leadership, namely a lack of dialogic space, conflict, teachers as barriers, lack of time and school micro politics.

4.6.1 A lack of dialogic space and control by the SMT.

Grant and Jugmohan (2008, p.5) cite Rule (2004) who states that dialogic space is “a space which can be physical (or virtual), intellectual, social or ideological but which is always characterized by dialogue”. The data in the case study suggested a heavy emphasis on restricted leadership as a characteristic of the school, particularly in zone three. Teachers in the study felt that there was a lack of dialogic space and this was a barrier to teacher leadership practice. This

concern was underscored by the following comment: *“SMT. No authority is given to teachers. Only the principal makes decisions, nobody else”* (TLS, A13, p.4). Another comment read *“The SMT do not give teachers the opportunity to take up any leadership opportunities in the school. Teachers are merely told what to do and when to do it. It puts teachers off taking the initiative. There is no consultation process with teachers. SMT make all the decisions (very autocratic)”* (TLS, A10, p.4). Some staff members felt disempowered because, in their opinion, management did not distribute leadership and some teachers were of the view that the principal was autocratic: *‘No authority is given to teachers. Only principal makes decisions, nobody else’*. TLA wrote in her journal: *“our school is run by management, in other words the principal...”* (JE, p. 2). She added that: *“Management is not flexible to change and this causes a lot of unhappiness for the teachers”* (JE, p.3). Staff felt particularly disempowered citing a lack of support from management.

Teachers also complained about workloads: *“Most educators are burdened with workloads, demands from the SMT and extra administrative duties demanded by the department”* (TLS, A2, p.4). There was a concern that teacher leadership was restricted because, *“too many rules that cannot be broken hinder teachers from taking the lead. It’s all the do’s and don’ts of the school policy that makes a teacher reluctant to take a leading role”* (TLS, A16, p. 4). Yet another entry in the teacher leadership survey read: *“Principal too bossy. Always wants to do it his way”* (TLS, A7, p.4). The data unearthed a perceived or real impenetrable wall around management which prevented the teacher leaders from speaking out. A teacher felt that *“teachers need to be involved in everything that has taken place in school”* (TLS, A14, p.4). In most cases the *“SMT’s are the ones who make decisions about the changes”* (TLS, A14, p.4). Another comment from a teacher was that *“the management feels that they should be the leaders with the decision-making power. Also people are afraid to lead... not enough support”* (TLS, A9, p.4). They were apprehensive about the reaction from management as illustrated by the following commented: *“I would say peoples’ fear of being misunderstood. One might feel as if they are threatening the present leaders”* (TLS, A12, p.4). Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p.92) are of the view that *“teachers’ voices are too often silent, and their perspective needs to be heard by all the stakeholders in the school reform efforts”*.

The teachers expressed disquiet about a top - down approach to management and an autocratic culture in the school hierarchy. TLA made the following input: *“But the thing is sometimes if management have set their minds on doing it... yes, yes, it’s this way.... no matter what we say as staff, its going to be done, the way management wants it done”* (FGI, p.3). TLB expressed her frustration and lack of freedom to speak out: *“Like you not allowed to express feelings. They tell you you can, but in actual you can’t ”* (II, p.1). TLC felt that there was a lack of democracy in the school leadership practice and a leaning towards autocracy: *“I think what sometimes I found is a little bit of no democracy... autocracy. I feel sometimes people’s views are overlooked and just ...”* (II, p.1). A comment from the survey simply stated *“power relations. Too much power invested in one individual”* (TLS, A3, p.4). 4.6.1

4.6.2 Conflict as a barrier to teacher leadership: The quest for courage and voice.

Conflict emerged as a barrier to teacher leadership. TLC stated that she tried to avoid creating tensions but felt that eventually issues should be taken to management:

I would but if it demands, like in a group, if it demands, if it’s conflict within a group, I’d like if we can’t talk it out, I’d say take it to management... but preferably, work it out with the members concerned yes, because you gotta work with these people everyday, and it’s no use creating strains... and it doesn’t help (II, p.2).

One sentiment that I alluded to earlier is that the teacher leaders avoided trying to be superior to their colleagues. Teacher leaders A and B were willing to confront people, especially if they felt that they were right about major issues, but they acknowledged that they did make mistakes. TLB admitted that she became angry at times but added that conflict with teachers rarely happened:

Hey, I get angry! (laughter), no I barely get into conflict with other teachers. There’s one or two times ..., I can speak to them, because I feel it’s better to rather speak to a person than to keep quiet and get angrier. So I feel that to confront the teacher, or anyone for that matter, is much better (II, p.1).

The following comments were made in the individual interviews and they underscore the fact that perhaps Fine's (2004), call for women to speak out was not heeded. In my study, TLB said that she had difficulty in expressing her feelings: *"It's a bit harder because you can't really express your feelings (laughter). It's like you allowed expressing yourself. They tell you you can, but in actual ... you can't. When you talk about teachers ... like me or with more authority? O.K normal teachers, like me, I can be able to handle it..."* (II, p.1). Similarly TLC stated that she was apprehensive about talking to management as she was scared of repercussions:

No, I feel like I'm going to be shot down. (Laughter). You say this is totally between us? I'm scared to say anything. Honestly, I'm terrified to say anything in a meeting. I have to still think very hard before I say anything. I need to think very hard before I open my mouth (II, p.4).

4.6.3 Teachers as barriers to teacher leadership

Muijs and Harris (2007, p.114) refer to Lieberman (1998) and Clemson-Ingram and Fessler (1997) who warn that there may occasionally be tensions between teacher groups where some take on leadership roles, whilst others do not, and ultimately the difference in affiliation can lead to estrangement. In the case study, TLC described her experiences with colleagues who were uncooperative: *"Lots of adversity out here. People sometimes don't take too nicely to"* (JE, p.4). This comment illustrated that informal practicing of teacher leadership was sometimes not readily accepted by the other teachers in the school. TLC wrote in her journal: *"It made me feel good and bad. Good because my goals were achieved and bad because of a few nasty comments from my colleagues"* (JE, P.5).

TLC wrote in her journal: *"I find one of the worst is educators who do not want to help or accept responsibility. They don't want to be leader but they also don't want to co-operate"* (p.19). Wasley (1991, p. 18) reveals that "in the existing hierarchical system, teachers do not have the capability to make professional decisions in the best interest of their students". Teacher leaders generally experienced difficulty in working with bureaucratic systems, suffered from lack of

incentives to assume new roles and met with teacher resistance to become involved in reform efforts. TLA lamented that more support was needed from the SMT: *“Another barrier I have experienced is non-co-operation from your supervisors/SMT, especially when funding is concerned. The SMT needs to make things easier for teacher leaders because they can help the SMT with issues related to the grade they are in”* (JE, p.19). TLA also felt that: *“many educators do not want to see others succeed but they don’t want to take responsibility in case they fail”* (JE, p. 19). In addition, TLA felt that she was prevented from reaching her potential: *“I feel caged. Lack of finances restricts creativity...fair enough; maybe the person’s not as imaginative or as creative as I am...”* (II, p.4). This comment referred to the perceived lack of financial backing from management for certain initiatives that the teacher leader needed to act on to enhance the quality of her teaching.

4.6.4 Lack of time and school micro politics as barriers to teacher leadership.

Time emerged as another barrier to teacher leadership in the case study school. In the open-ended responses to the questionnaire, teachers cited a lack of time for self-development. As an example, one teacher wrote: *“Time. The school day is always rushed, something always suffers”* (TLS, A17, p.4). Some teachers also felt that there was a lack of opportunities to develop their leadership skills. Some teachers felt that their demonstration of leadership abilities in the school would be perceived as a threat to current leadership in the school and this was coupled with a fear of being misunderstood: *“I would say people’s fear of being misunderstood. One might feel as if they are threatening the present leaders”* (TLS, A12, p.4).

Teachers felt that work overload such as administrative demands and calls for statistics from the education department not only hindered their teaching, but also inhibited their enactment of teacher leadership: *“Most educators are burdened with workloads, demands from SMT and extra administrative duties demanded by the Department of Education”* (TLS, A2, p.4). Many responses from teachers bemoaned the lack of support structures from the community, the School Governing Body, parents as well as the DoE. Some teachers expressed concern that there was a lack of representivity by staff in decision-making concerning school issues. Some teachers

expressed the view that partial involvement of staff in school matters which involved change, constituted a barrier to teacher leadership. Teachers also cited rigid policies of the school that inhibited creativity and discouraged teacher leadership. A commonly mentioned problem was that of large of large class numbers coupled with inadequate resources: “Teacher *learner ratio*, *many learners in each class, making it difficult to cater for individual differences. Few textbooks resulting in learners sharing* (TLS, A4, p.4)”.

TLB spoke about not knowing the culture of other teachers: “*Collectively, parents, community, departments. We don’t know much about our traditional Zulu culture*” (FGI, p.5). These words were said by the teacher leader to emphasise the point that it was difficult to perform at an optimal level because insufficient knowledge of the culture of colleagues would sometimes lead to misunderstandings which impacted on collegiality amongst the staff. Teacher leaders were more likely to be respected and supported by colleagues if they had demonstrated respect for diversity.

In the following chapter I pen some conclusions and possible lessons that could be learnt from this case study in terms of teacher leadership enactment in the South African context.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was embarked on to take a closer look at the current practices of teacher leadership in an urban primary school in Kwa-Zulu Natal, a decade and a half after the election of a democratic government in South Africa in 1994. New policies which were introduced by the incoming government signaled the end to an apartheid styled education system and consequently, schools were re-organised from traditionally top-down leadership and management institutions to organizations that practiced more shared or distributed leadership and management practices. Much debate followed about whether the transition was successful and whether it allowed for a more distributed leadership practice in schools that made room for the level-one teachers to practice as a teacher leaders. However, aside from well-meaning policies, teacher leadership enactment is never an easy task especially for the ‘ordinary’ teacher. According to American researchers, Sledge and Moorhead (2005, p.6) “attempting to positively affect the attitudes and beliefs of other teachers is a major responsibility for teacher leaders and may be the most complex, especially since it is a highly personal affective measure”. In addition, Sledge and Moorhead (2005, p. 10) maintain that:

As teacher leaders equip other teachers with high-yield best practices that result in increased student achievement, teacher leaders must be prepared to support the

new learnings of teachers. Teacher leaders must create conditions for teachers to refine, practice, reflect and improve their practice over time.

The literature suggests that there is a place for teacher leadership enactment in schools and that teacher leaders can make a positive contribution. According to Sintz (2001, p. 4) “while there seems to be a lack of hard data on the effects of teacher leadership roles, some research exists noting positive influences of teacher leadership on teachers’ feelings of professionalism and student academic performance”. In addition Sintz (2001, p.4) refers to research by Ladson-Billings (1999) and Dilworth and Imig (1995) which demonstrates that “when professional development is designed and implemented by teachers, rather than directed from above, teachers enjoy increased feelings of being valued and are more willing to adopt new pedagogical techniques”. Sintz (2001, p.4) also refers to Copland (2003) in whose view leadership is not “principal-centric” in schools that have “demonstrated significant improvements in teaching and learning, but is rather distributed among various school constituents”.

This case study helped to answer the research questions: firstly, how teacher leadership was enacted in schools and, secondly, what factors promoted or acted as barriers to teacher leadership? In the first section of this final chapter I summarise the response to the research questions. The limitations to the study are discussed in the following section and I conclude with recommendations for further research.

5.2 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

5.2.1 The enactment of teacher leadership.

In terms of the model by Grant (2008) on understanding how teacher leadership is enacted within zones and roles, the data revealed that teacher leaders were active within the different zones and assumed various leadership roles in the school as well as in the community. The data revealed that although the primary participants enacted teacher leadership roles, they worked in a severely

restricted and autocratic environment. As mentioned earlier, the three principal participants in the case study indicated that teacher leadership enactment did occur beyond the office with its starting point situated within the classroom walls. The three teacher leaders played an active role in the classroom, (zone one) where they enjoyed autonomy. They revealed that they delegated some of the duties to those members of the staff who had the skills that were best suited for the task. This was evidence of a distributed form of leadership. In zone three (in whole school development) and within role six (participating in school-level decision-making), the three teacher leaders in my research declared in their responses that they organized sports trips, excursions, fun days, graduations and market days. These activities were a part of general fundraising efforts in the school. Teacher leaders readily shared their opinions on educational matters. In addition they attended parent meetings. The data revealed that although the school was fairly well resourced, there were shortages of resources at times. On those occasions the teacher leaders used their initiative to ensure that teaching continued. Within zone four (beyond the school into the community), the three teacher leaders networked with other schools by comparing strategies and comparing notes. They readily assisted other teachers. The data showed that there were degrees of teacher leadership enactment in the case study school. Teacher leaders were mostly active within the classroom (zone one) where they were continuing to teach and improve their skills by studying further and attending workshops. Teacher leadership enactment was less evident with regard to working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities (zone two). Within this zone teacher leaders participated in the performance evaluation of their colleagues and also assisted them. In zone three (outside the classroom in whole school development) teacher leadership activity was severely restricted because of an overemphasis on control by the principal and SMT. Although there was evidence of teacher leadership enactment between neighbouring schools in the community (zone four), teacher leaders did not display a strong activity within this zone. Whilst they assisted other teachers, the data was less convincing about the teacher leaders' role in leading in-service education.

5.2.2 Factors that promoted teacher leadership.

In the teacher leadership survey that was conducted within the school, teachers generally felt that the freedom to express ideas and introduce innovations in the school would result in happy teachers. Teachers pointed out that such freedom would allow education delivery to be carried out in an improved climate, where teacher leaders were free to make decisions and tasks were carried out from a distributed leadership perspective, coupled with a sense of ownership.

The staff was divided into teams by management to carry out certain responsibilities such as catering or doing the décor for functions. The three principal participants served on several of these teams. Such teams could only function optimally if shared decision-making was exercised. A strong sense of collegiality prevailed within these teams and it made the enactment of leadership practice easier and more rewarding.

Notwithstanding the fact that there were factors that promoted teacher leadership activity within the case study school, the data also revealed factors that were not conducive to leadership enactment in the case study school. I now discuss those barriers in the next section.

5.2.3 Factors that acted as a barrier to teacher leadership.

Muijs and Harris (2003, p.442) refer to Vail and Redick (1993) who caution that “while it may appear from the literature that teacher leadership can be advantageous to both the individual teacher and their school, there are a number of barriers that need to be overcome and preconditions that need to be met to ensure that the teacher leadership operates effectively”. Adding to the debate, Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p.4) warn that “although progress in the recognition of teacher leadership is evident, there are still many challenges”. They say, as an example, “the egalitarian norms of school culture suggest that all teachers should be equal”.

In the case study school the data revealed that whilst teacher leadership was practiced it was restricted. The data showed that the three principal participants in the case study experienced

resistance when they attempted to play a leadership role. Some of their colleagues were either openly hostile towards them or they practiced creative insubordination. These colleagues would criticise an idea but offer no alternative. According to Wasley (1991) there are a number of paradoxes that pose a challenge to teacher leadership. According to Wasley (1991, p.164), one such paradox is the fact that we wish to make changes to our schools “while maintaining things the way they are”. She elaborates:

The whole discussion of teacher leadership is centered on the assumption that teachers need to be more involved in the decision making that takes place in their schools. And yet, schools are hierarchical systems. Most schools are organized as fundamental bureaucracies with hierarchical decision-making structures in place to facilitate efficiency and productivity (1991, p.164).

In the case study school the three participants were eager to introduce innovations but they complained of the bureaucratic and hierarchical culture of the school. They felt that the overwhelming emphasis on control in the school was extremely prohibitive to teacher leadership. The data revealed, among other factors that stood as barriers to teacher leadership, that there was an impenetrable wall around management, perceived or otherwise. There was a perception among teacher leaders in the study that a hierarchy existed at the school which partially impeded freedom of expression. The three primary participants in the study expressed the view that they did not feel free to express themselves in meetings or to make decisions on school matters. They were wary of what management would say in the event that they made decisions on their own. The three teacher leaders felt out of touch with the SMT.

These principal participants felt restrained by an ‘impenetrable wall’ around management which denied them voice and prevented them from being change agents. These findings are consistent with the results of the study conducted by Muijs and Harris (2003, p.442) which suggested that “the literature also points towards ‘top-down’ management structures in schools as a major impediment to the development of teacher leadership, as they militate against teachers attaining autonomy and taking on leadership roles within the school”. The school was very efficiently run by the principal, but the teacher leaders in the study felt that the strong emphasis on control was autocratic and inhibitive in terms of the practice of teacher leadership. Harris and Muijs (2005, p.116) report similar findings in their research and observe that “as the leadership style of the

previous head was generally quite hierarchical, initiatives were encouraged as long as they did not interfere with senior management policies and aims'. Muijs and Harris (2001, p.442) mention Wheatley (2000) who suggested that in the context of businesses, it was fear and uncertainty that could lead to "an overemphasis on control as the prime mechanism in maintaining bureaucratic and hierarchical structures in organizations". In the case study school my observations revealed that whilst there was no fear and uncertainty from the SMT, the SMT and the principal possibly lacked confidence in the abilities of the teacher leader. This was probably the reason that there was an overemphasis on control over everything in the school. Muijs and Harris (2001, pp.442) assert that teacher leadership roles "cannot successfully be imposed by management". I agree with this view because we must allow for emergent leadership. Wasley (1991, p.21) reports that "there appears to be a growing consensus that teachers must be involved in the restructuring of their own profession". She makes a point that teachers must be involved in the decision-making process with regard to the roles that they should play. I support this view because it is only when that happens that teachers will feel valued and will feel a sense of ownership. The three teacher leaders were unhappy with unfair criticism from the School Management Team (SMT).

The three teacher leaders in the case study were of the view that their efforts to introduce innovations were met with criticism or opposition from the principal, management and other members of staff. In some cases criticisms came from those who did not want to lead! The (SMT) came in for criticism, as well, from the primary participants in the study. Teacher leaders felt that the SMT were not very supportive. According to the three teacher leaders the lack of support included exclusion from some decision-making opportunities, where change was concerned, and they also felt that leadership opportunities were not distributed to them.

The data also revealed that some members of staff opposed any attempts at change, as a rule, and they lacked the desire to take on leadership positions. Wasley (1991) holds the view that teachers are unwilling to lead because they are misunderstood and are not supported or rewarded for extra work that they perform. These teachers were the source of tensions between teacher groups (Muijs and Harris, 2007) which led to estrangement. Whilst there were sometimes a lack of understanding among teachers and management, The lack of resources could also lead to strain.

Teacher leaders in the case study expressed the view that whilst resources in the school were adequate generally, the sourcing of monies from the office was difficult and limited progress in terms of introducing changes. The distribution of time during the school day was an aspect of contention according to the principal participants in the study. The teacher leaders felt that the day should be structured differently to allow teacher leaders to operate as teacher leaders. They complained that the workload was overwhelming, especially with regards to demands from the DoE for statistical returns. The teacher leaders were left with little time to implement their own planning or to make a meaningful contribution in terms of teacher leadership enactment. In their responses to the questionnaire, the teachers generally felt that there was a shortage of time for self-development.

The data revealed, in terms of acknowledgement of diversity within the staff, that knowledge or the lack thereof, of the cultures of other members of staff had an impact on the successful enactment of teacher leadership. The lack of knowledge of the customs and cultures of colleagues interfered with the delegation of duties and the exercising of authority of teacher leaders. For example, some men do not take kindly to being corrected by a woman.

In the next section I offer some recommendations for the improvement of teacher leadership in the case study school.

5.3 Recommendations for practice.

In the case study school teacher leaders need to build on the confidence that is inherent in them so that they can boldly, and with due respect for protocol, make recommendations to management. The teacher leaders need to speak up and persuade management that their proposals have merit. Researchers Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001, p.124) suggest that “teachers can learn the skills they need to be leaders; the more complex task is designing a healthy context for their leadership”. In my opinion teacher leaders need to move from a mindset of inferiority based on the logic that they do not have positionality in the school. According to Wasley (1991) the results of collective bargaining process in the USA rendered all teachers equal status. Wasley

(1991) adds that teachers cannot see each other any other way because there is a history of equality within the profession. I feel that similarly, in the South African context, teacher leaders need to re-establish the fact that they are all potential leaders. Therefore, from a professional viewpoint, there is no need to hold a formal position to be able participate in meaningful decision-making. Teacher leaders should work closely with management in informal settings where it will be relatively easier to propose innovations or to offer constructive criticism where necessary. Wasley (1991, p.167) refers to untenable situations that militate against teacher leadership as “such circumstances, where teachers want the opportunity to influence their colleagues from a teacher’s base but cannot gain authority or integrity unless they come from an unequal and hierarchical position, completely confound teacher leadership”. We need to break this harness and we need to lessen the status that we tend to reserve for those in formal positions. Wasley (1991) alludes to a case in her research where the task of performing teacher leadership activities was delegated to a teacher. She further explains that the teacher did not participate in the decision-making process about the creation or the design of the role. This scenario also happens within the case study school with the principal and SMT endeavouring to empower teacher leaders by selecting roles for them. It is quite possible that some teacher leaders are set up for failure because they are not part of the initial decision-making.

I think that the practice of transformational leadership is manifesting itself in the school and it certainly works for the school. However, the culture of the school needs to transform. Some teacher leaders bemoaned the fact that the school management has a hierarchical and autocratic culture which inhibited decision making opportunities for the teacher leaders. It is my impression that teacher leaders in the school perpetuate the very hierarchical system that they find problematic, in terms of teacher leadership enactment, because they choose to be passive and subservient. I believe that it is a culture that has been passed on by tradition. However, in some responses, the primary participants also intimated that they were in favour of the principal making decisions as it gave direction for the school. To find common ground the logical route to take would then be one proposed by Sergiovanni (1990, p. 24) where “leaders and followers are united in pursuit of higher-level goals common to both. Both want to be the best, both want to become the best, both want to shape the school in a new direction”. Teacher leaders need to approach the management with less trepidation and armed with the strengths of their conviction,

as decisions are made in a spirit of transparency, because an open door policy does prevail at the school.

The teacher leaders in this case study expressed the view that the IQMS process was problematic in its implementation. One of the challenges, presented by the IQMS process, was how to make it a fair and reliable assessment process. There is a need to make it truly ‘continuous’ by setting more time aside for the evaluation of teachers. Evaluation should be carried out more regularly and not on a once-off basis. I believe that such problems can be solved by an improved dialogue between staff, management and the principal. The teacher leaders, who are at the coal-face, can make invaluable inputs in this regard.

5.5 FURTHER RESEARCH.

Certainly, further research can and should be conducted on the enactment of teacher leadership in South African Schools. Such research can create a greater awareness of the concept of teacher leadership in schools and help to build on the factors that promote teacher leadership practice in schools. The data in this case study research revealed factors which are conducive to teacher leadership practice such as mentoring of teachers, sufficient support from the school management teams in terms of curriculum matters, provision of resources to improve the quality of lessons taught by the teachers and professional development. Much more attention needs to be focused on the factors that frustrate teacher leadership practice in the schools. These should be minimised. Further research needs to be conducted on teacher leadership enactment in South African Schools with a focus on the factors that are barriers to teacher leadership. In this regard the IQMS process certainly needs closer scrutiny, especially as it is linked to Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD) and remuneration for teachers. Freedom of expression in the school and dialogic space is also an issue that needs to be addressed in schools. Teacher leaders too, have to reflect on their own inhibitions so that they can speak out on issues. It is not uncommon for them to remain silent when invited by management to speak, because they feel intimidated.

More needs to be learnt about teacher leadership in the South African context, and from a distributed leadership perspective. Further research on teacher leadership could bring about a clearer understanding and a greater degree of tolerance in hierarchical institutions, thus paving the way for emergent leadership.

I believe that further research on teacher leadership enactment in South African schools can expose its advantages and facilitate a merging of leadership styles and cultures to the benefit of teaching and learning in South Africa. The primary participants in this case study called for greater decision-making freedom coupled with entrenching of a dialogic space in the school. They acknowledged the important role that was played by the principal in giving direction but also felt that teacher leaders needed more latitude. Clearly this suggested the need for merging of autocratic and democratic leadership styles in the school in such a way that the best characteristics of both were harnessed.

Continued research on the concept of teacher leadership enactment by those teachers who are not in management positions, can serve as a platform for teachers' voices to be heard and to encourage school management structures to share decision-making and distribute leadership.

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APPENDIX 1

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION 2008 - 2009

SCHOOL OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

1. Background information on the school

- Name of the school
- Number of learners
- Number of teachers
- Number on SMT
- School Quintile
- Subjects offered
- What is the medium of instruction
- Pass rate 2005_____ 2006_____ 2007_____ 2008_____
- Classrooms: Block____ Bricks____ Prefab____ Mud____ Other _____
- Does the school have the following:

<input type="radio"/> List	<input type="radio"/> Yes (describe)	<input type="radio"/> No
<input type="radio"/> Library	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/> Laboratory	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/> Sports facilities/sports kit	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/> Soccer field	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/> netball field	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/> tennis court	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input type="radio"/> cricket field	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- School fence
- School fees per annum
- Does your school fund raise
- List your fundraising activities

- School attendance : Poor____ Regular____ Satisfactory____ Good____ Fair____ Excellent____
- What is the average drop-out rate per year:
- Possible reasons for the drop out:
- Does the school have an admission policy:
- Is the vision and mission of the school displayed
- What is the furthest distance that learners travel to and from school
- Have there been any evident changes in your community after 1994.

2. Staffing

- Staff room- notices (budget), seating arrangements
- Classroom sizes
- Pupil-teacher ratio
- Offices- who occupies etc
- Staff turnover- numbers on a given day
- School timetable visibility
- Assemblies- teachers' roles
- Unionism-break-time, meetings
- Gender-roles played, numbers in staff
- Age differences between staff members
- Years of service of principal at the school
- Professional ethos- punctuality, discipline, attendance, general behaviour.

3. Curriculum: What teaching and learning is taking place at the school?

- Are the learners supervised?
- Is active teaching and learning taking place?
- Are the learners loitering? Reasons?
- What is the general practice of teaching – teacher or learner centred?
- What subjects are taught?
- Is there a timetable?
- Do learners or teachers rotate for lessons?
- Has the school responded to national/provincial changes?
- Is the classroom conducive to teaching and learning?
- Is there evidence of cultural and sporting activities?
- How are these organized and controlled?
- Is there evidence of assessment and feedback based on assessment?
- Evidence of teacher collaboration in the same learning area?
- Is homework given and how often is it marked?
- Are learners encouraged to engage in peer teaching or self-study after school hours?

4. Leadership and decision-making, organisational life of the school.

Organisational Structure

- Is there a welcoming atmosphere on arrival?
- Is the staff on first name basis?
- How does leadership relate to staff and learners?
- What structures are in place for staff participation?
- What admin systems are visible?
- What type of leadership and management style is evident?
- Is the leadership rigid or flexible?
- Are teachers involved in decision-making?
- Is there a feeling of discipline at the school?
- How would you describe the ethos of the school?
- Are teachers active in co and extra curricular activities?
- Is there an active and supportive governing body?
- Is the educator rep on the SGB active in the decision making process?
- Are teachers active on school committees?
- Do teachers take up leadership positions on committees?
- Working relationship between the SGB and staff?
- Is the governing body successful?
- Is there evidence of student leadership?
- Relationship between the SGB and the community?
- How does the governing body handle school problems?

5. Relationships with Education department and other outside authorities

- Are there any documents signed by the Department officials during their school visits? e.g. log book
- Is there a year planner, list of donors, contact numbers e.g. helpline, department offices etc.?
- Is there any evidence pertaining to the operation of the school eg. Minute books and attendance registers?

APPENDIX 2

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION 2008 - 2009

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR QUESTIONNAIRE

- Use a BLACK or BLUE ink pen. Please do not use a pencil.
- In the interests of confidentiality, you are not required to supply your name on the questionnaire.

- Please respond to each of the following items by placing a CROSS, which correctly reflects your opinion and experiences on the role of teacher leadership in your school.
- This questionnaire is to be answered by an educator.¹

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male		Female	
------	--	--------	--

2. Age

21-30		31-40		41-50		51+	
-------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-----	--

3. Your formal qualification is:

Below M+3		M+3		M+4		M+5 and above	
-----------	--	-----	--	-----	--	---------------	--

4. Nature of employment

Permanent		Temporary		Contract	
-----------	--	-----------	--	----------	--

5. Employer

¹ The word 'educator' refers to a post level 1 educator

State		SGB	
-------	--	-----	--

6. Years of teaching experience

0-5yrs		6-10yrs		11-15yrs		16+yrs	
--------	--	---------	--	----------	--	--------	--

B. TEACHER LEADERSHIP SURVEY

Instruction: Place a CROSS in the column that most closely describes your opinion on the role of teacher leadership in your school.

Scale: 4= Strongly Agree 3=Agree 2= Disagree 1= Strongly disagree

B. 1

I believe:	4	3	2	1
7. Only the SMT should make decisions in the school.				
8. All educators ⁱ can take a leadership role in the school.				
9. That only people in positions of authority should lead.				
10. That men are better able to lead than women				

B. 2

Which of the following tasks are you involved with?	4	3	2	1
11. I take initiative without being delegated duties.				
12. I reflect critically on my own classroom teaching.				

13. I organise and lead reviews of the school year plan.				
14. I participate in in-school decision making.				
15. I give in-service training to colleagues.				
16. I provide curriculum development knowledge to my colleagues.				
17. I provide curriculum development knowledge to teachers in other schools				
18. I participate in the performance evaluation of teachers.				
19. I choose textbook and instructional materials for my grade/learning area.				
20. I co-ordinate aspects of the extra-mural activities in my school.				
21. I co-ordinate aspects of the extra-mural activities beyond my school.				
22. I set standards for pupil behaviour in my school.				
23. I design staff development programmes for my school.				
24. I co-ordinate cluster meetings for my learning area.				
25. I keep up to date with developments in teaching practices and learning area.				
26. I set the duty roster for my colleagues.				

Instruction: Please respond with a CROSS either Yes/ No/ Not applicable, to your involvement in each committee.

If YES, respond with a CROSS by selecting ONE option between: Nominated by colleagues, Delegated by SMT or Volunteered.

B.3

				How I got onto this committee:		
I play a leadership role in the following committee/s:				Nominated by colleagues	Delegated by SMT	Volunteered
27. Catering committee						
28. Sports committee						
29. Bereavement /condolence committee.						
30. Cultural committee.						
31. Library committee.						
32 Subject/ learning area committee.						
33 Awards committee						
34 Time- table committee.						
35. SGB (School Governing Body)						
36. SDT (School Development Team)						
37. Fundraising committee.						
38. Maintenance committee.						

39. Safety and security committee.						
40. Discipline committee						
41. Teacher Union						
42. Assessment committee						
43. Admission committee						
44. Other (Please specify)						

Instruction: Place a CROSS in the column that most closely describes your opinion on what factors support or hinder teacher leadership.

Scale: 4= Strongly Agree 3= Agree 2= Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

B.4

My school is a place where:	4	3	2	1
45 The SMT has trust in my ability to lead.				
46. Teachers resist leadership from other teachers.				
47. Teachers are allowed to try out new ideas.				
48 The SMT (School Management Team) values teachers' opinions.				
49. The SMT allows teachers to participate in school level decision-making.				
50. Only the SMT takes important decisions.				
51. Only the SMT takes initiative in the school.				
52. Adequate opportunities are created for the staff to develop professionally.				
53. Team work is encouraged.				
54. Men are given more leadership roles than women.				

D. Teacher Leadership: Open-ended questions

1. What is your understanding of teacher leadership? Please explain.

2. Have you ever been involved in leading in any school related activity, which is outside your classroom? If so, please give examples of your teacher leadership.

3. In your opinion what hinders the development of teacher leadership in the context of your school? Please discuss.

4. In your opinion what are the benefits to teacher leadership in the context of your school? Please discuss.

Thank you for your time and effort!

APPENDIX 3

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION 2008 - 2009

SMT QUESTIONNAIRE

INSTRUCTIONS FOR QUESTIONNAIRE

- Use a BLACK or BLUE ink pen. Please do not use a pencil.
- In the interests of confidentiality, you are not required to supply your name on the questionnaire.
- Please respond to each of the following items by placing a CROSS, which correctly reflects your opinion and experiences on the role of teacher leadership in your school.
- This questionnaire is to be answered by a member of the School Management Team (SMT).

A. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1. Gender

Male		Female	
------	--	--------	--

2. Age

21-30		31-40		41-50		51+	
-------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-----	--

3. Your formal qualification is:

Below M+3		M+3		M+4		M+5 and above	
-----------	--	-----	--	-----	--	---------------	--

4. Nature of employment

Permanent		Temporary		Acting	
-----------	--	-----------	--	--------	--

5. Years of teaching experience

0-5yrs		6-10yrs		11-15yrs		16+yrs	
--------	--	---------	--	----------	--	--------	--

6. Period of service in current position

0-5yrs		6-10yrs		11-15yrs		16+yrs	
--------	--	---------	--	----------	--	--------	--

B. SCHOOL INFORMATION

7. Learner Enrolment of your school

1-299		300-599		600+	
-------	--	---------	--	------	--

8. Number of educators, including management, in your school

2-10		11-19		20-28		29-37		38+	
------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-------	--	-----	--

9. School type

Primary		Secondary		Combined	
---------	--	-----------	--	----------	--

10. School Fees

No Fees		R1-R500		R501-R1000		R1001-R5000		R5001+	
---------	--	---------	--	------------	--	-------------	--	--------	--

C. TEACHER LEADERSHIP SURVEY

Instruction: Place a CROSS in the column that most closely describes your opinion on the role of teacher leadership in your school.

Scale 4= Strongly agree 3= Agree 2= Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree

C. 1

I believe:	4	3	2	1
11. Only the SMT should make decisions in the school.				
12. All teachers should take a leadership role in the school.				
13. That only people in formal positions of authority should lead.				
14. That men are better able to lead than women				
15. Educators ⁱ should be supported when taking on leadership roles				

Instruction: Place a CROSS in the column that most closely describes your opinion on the role of teacher leadership in your school.

Scale 4= Strongly agree 3= Agree 2= Disagree 1= Strongly disagree

C.2

Which of the following tasks are you involved with?	4	3	2	1
---	---	---	---	---

16. I work with other educators in organising and leading reviews of the school year plan				
17. I encourage educators to participate in in-school decision making				
18. I support educators in providing curriculum development knowledge to other educators				
19. I support educators in providing curriculum development knowledge to educators in other schools				
20. I provide educators with opportunity to choose textbooks and learning materials for their grade or learning area				
21. I work with other educators in designing staff development programme for the school				
22. I include other educators in designing the duty roster				

Instruction: Place a CROSS in the column that most closely describes your opinion on what factors support or hinder teacher leadership.

Scale: 4= strongly agree 3= Agree 2= Disagree 1= strongly disagree

C.3

My school is a place where:	5	4	3	2	1
23. The SMT has trust in educator's ability to lead.					
24. Educators are allowed to try out new ideas.					

25. The SMT (School Management Team) values teachers' opinions.					
26. The SMT allows teachers to participate in school level decision-making.					
27. Only the SMT takes important decisions.					
28. Only the SMT takes initiative in the school.					
29. Adequate opportunities are created for the staff to develop professionally.					
30. Team work is encouraged.					
31. Men are given more leadership roles than women.					

D. Teacher Leadership: Open-ended questions

1. What is your understanding of teacher leadership? Please explain.

2. Have you ever encouraged educators in leading in any school related activity, which is outside their classrooms? If so, please give example

3. In your opinion what hinders the development of teacher leadership in the context of your school? Please discuss.

4. In your opinion what promotes the development of teacher leadership in the context of your school? Please discuss.

Thank you for your time and effort!

APPENDIX 4

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION 2008 - 2009

TEACHER LEADERSHIP OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

(BORROWED FROM HARRIS & LAMBERT, 2003)

A. Adult Development			
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1. Defines self in relation to others in the community. The opinions of others, particularly those in authority, are highly important.	Defines self as independent from the group, separating needs and goals from others. Does not often see the need for group action.	Understands self as interdependent with others in the school community, seeking feedback from others and counsel from self.	Engages colleagues in acting out of a sense of self and shared values, forming interdependent learning communities.
2. Does not yet recognise the need for self-reflection. Tends to implement strategies as learnt without making adjustments arising from reflective practice.	Personal reflection leads to refinement of strategies and routines. Does not often share reflections with others. Focuses on argument for own ideas. Does not support systems which are designed to enhance reflective practice.	Engages in self-reflection as a means of improving practices. Models these processes for others in the school community. Holds conversations that share views and develops understanding of each other's assumptions.	Evokes reflection in others. Develops and supports a culture for self-reflection that may include collaborative planning, peer coaching, action research and reflective writing.
3. Absence of ongoing evaluation of their teaching. Does not yet systematically connect teacher and student behaviours.	Self-evaluation is not often shared with others; however, responsibility for problems or errors is typically ascribed to others such as students or family.	Highly self-evaluative and introspective. Accepts shared responsibility as a natural part of a school community. No need for blame.	Enables others to be self-evaluative and introspective, leading towards self- and shared responsibility.
4. In need of effective strategies to demonstrate respect and concern for others. Is polite yet primarily focuses on own needs.	Exhibits respectful attitude towards others in most situations, usually privately. Can be disrespectful in public debate. Gives little feedback to others.	Consistently shows respect and concern for all members of the school community. Validates and respects qualities in and opinions of others.	Encourages & supports others in being respectful, caring, trusted members of the school community. Initiates recognition of ideas and achievements of colleagues as part of an overall goal of collegial empowerment.
B. Dialogue			

1. Interactions with others are primarily social, not based on common goals or group learning.	Communicates with others around logistical issues/problems. Sees goals as individually set for each classroom, not actively participating in efforts to focus on common goals.	Communicates well with individuals and groups in the community as a means of creating & sustaining relationships and focusing on teaching and learning. Actively participates in dialogue.	Facilitates effective dialogue among members of the school community in order to build relationships and focus dialogue on teaching and learning.
2. Does not pose questions of or seek to influence the group. Participation often resembles consent or compliance.	Makes personal point of view, although not assumptions, explicit. When opposed to ideas, often asks impeding questions which can derail or divert dialogue.	Asks questions and provides insights that reflect an understanding of the need to surface assumptions and address the goals of the community.	Facilitates communication among colleagues by asking provocative questions which open productive dialogue.
3. Does not actively seek information or new professional knowledge which challenges current practices. Shares knowledge with others only when requested.	Attends staff development activities planned by the school or district. Occasionally shares knowledge during informal & formal gatherings. Does not seek knowledge that challenges status quo.	Possesses current knowledge and information about teaching and learning. Actively seeks to use that understanding to alter teaching practices. Studies own practice.	Works with others to construct knowledge through multiple forms of enquiry, action research, examination of disaggregated school data, insights from others & from outside research community.
4. Responds to situations in similar ways; expects predictable responses from others. Is sometimes confused by variations from expected norms.	Responds to situations in different, although predictable ways. Expects consistency from those in authority and from self.	Responds to situations with an open mind and flexibility; welcomes multiple perspectives from others. Alters own assumptions during dialogue when evidence is persuasive.	Promotes an open mind and flexibility in others; invites multiple perspectives and interpretations as a means of challenging old assumptions and framing new actions.
C. Collaboration			

1. Decision making is based on individual wants and needs rather than those of the group as a whole.	Promotes individual autonomy in classroom decision making. Relegates school decision-making to the principal.	Actively participates in shared decision-making. Volunteers to follow through on group decisions.	Promotes collaborative decision-making that provides options to meet the diverse individual and group needs of the school community.
2. Sees little value in team building, although seeks membership in the group. Will participate, although does not connect activities with larger school goals.	Doesn't seek to participate in roles or settings that involve team building. Considers most team building activities to be 'touchy-feely' and frivolous.	Is an active participant in team building, seeking roles and opportunities to contribute to the work of the team. Sees teamness' as central to community.	Engages colleagues in team-building activities that develop mutual trust and promotes collaborative decision-making.
3. Sees problems as caused by the actions of others, e.g. students, parents; or blames self. Uncertain regarding the specifics of one's own involvement.	Interprets problems from own perspective. Plays the role of observer and critic, not accepting responsibility for emerging issues and dilemmas. Considers most problems to be a function of poor management.	Acknowledges that problems involve all members of the community. Actively seeks to define problems and proposes resolutions or approaches which address the situation. Finding blame is not relevant.	Engages colleagues in identifying and acknowledging problems. Acts with others to frame problems and seek resolutions. Anticipates situations which may cause recurrent problems.
4. Does not recognise or avoids conflict in the school community. Misdirects frustrations into withdrawal or personal hurt. Avoids talking about issues that could evoke conflict.	Does not shy away from conflict. Engages in conflict as a means of surfacing competing ideas, approaches. Understands that conflict is intimidating to many.	Anticipates and seeks to resolve or intervene in conflict. Actively tries to channel conflict into problem-solving endeavours. Is not intimidated by conflict, though wouldn't seek it.	Surfaces, addresses and mediates conflict within the school and with parents and community. Understands that negotiating conflict is necessary for personal and school change.
D. Organisational change			

1. Focuses on present situations and issues; seldom plans for either short or long term futures. Expects certainty.	Demonstrates forward thinking for own classroom. Usually does not connect own planning to the future of the school.	Develops forward thinking skills in working with others and planning for school improvements. Future goals based on common values and vision.	Provides for and creates opportunities to engage others in forward (visionary) thinking and planning based on common core values.
2. Maintains a low profile during school change, basically uninvolved in group processes. Attempts to comply with changes. Expects compliance from others.	Questions status quo; suggests that others need to change in order to improve it. Selects those changes which reflect personal philosophies. Opposes or ignores practices which require a school-wide focus.	Shows enthusiasm and involvement in school change. Leads by example. Explores possibilities and implements changes for both personal and professional development.	Initiates action towards innovative change; motivates, draws others into action for school & district improvements. Encourages others to implement practices which support school-wide learning. Provides follow-up planning and coaching support.
3. Culturally unaware. 'I treat everyone the same'. Stage of naivety to socio-political implications of race, culture, ethnic and gender issues.	Growing sensitivity to political implications of diversity. Acknowledges that cultural differences exist and influence individuals and organisations.	Understanding and acceptance: 'aha' level. Has developed an appreciation of own cultural identities and a deeper appreciation / respect for cultural differences. Applies understanding in classroom and school.	Commitment to value of and build on cultural differences. Actively seeks to involve others in designing programmes and policies which support the development of a multi-cultural world.
4. Attends to students in his or her own classroom. Possessive of children and space. Has not yet secured a developmental view of children.	Concerned for the preparation of children in previous grades. Critical of preparation of children and readiness of children to meet established standards.	Developmental view of children translates into concern for all children in the school (not only those in own classroom) and their future performances in further educational settings.	Works with colleagues to develop programmes, policies that take holistic view of children's development (e.g. multi-graded classes, parent education, follow-up studies).

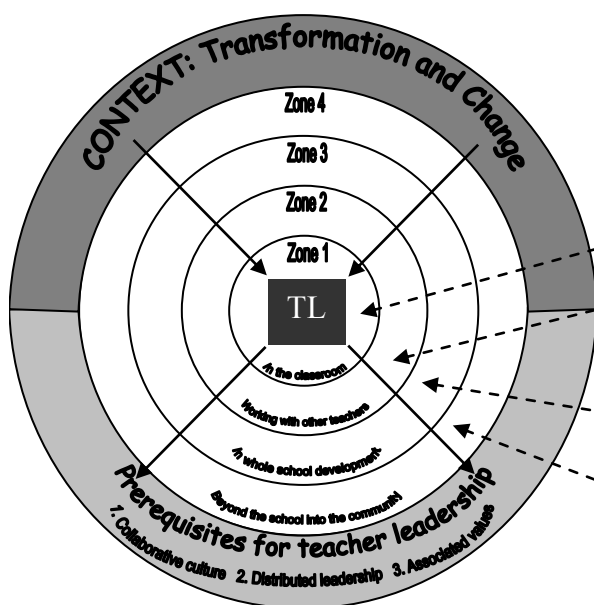
5. Works alongside new teachers, is cordial although does not offer assistance. Lacks confidence in giving feedback to others.	Shares limited information with new teachers, mainly that pertaining to school admin functions (e.g. attendance accounting, grade reports). Does not offer to serve as master teacher.	Collaborates with, supports and gives feedback to new and student teachers. Often serves as master teacher.	Takes responsibility for support & development of systems for student & new teachers. Develops collaborative programmes with school, district and universities.
6. Displays little interest in the selection of new teachers. Assumes that they will be appointed by the district or those otherwise in authority.	Assumes that district will recruit and appoint teachers. Has not proposed a more active role to the teacher association.	Becomes actively involved in the setting of criteria and the selection of new teachers.	Advocates to schools, districts and teachers' association the development of hiring practices that involve teachers, parents and students in processes. Promotes the hiring of diversity candidates.

APPENDIX 5

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: 2008 – 2009

ZONES AND ROLES MODEL OF TEACHER LEADERSHIP

(Grant, forthcoming 2008a)



TEACHER LEADERSHIP

First level of analysis: Four Zones

Second level of analysis: Six Roles

One	One: Continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching
<i>In the classroom</i>	
Two	Two: Providing curriculum development knowledge
Working with other teachers and learners outside the classroom in curricular and extra-curricular activities	Three: Leading in-service education and assisting other teachers
	Four: Participating in performance evaluation of teachers
Three	Five: Organising and leading peer reviews of school practice
Outside the classroom in whole school development	Six: Participating in school level decision-making
Four	Two: Providing curriculum development knowledge
Between neighbouring schools in the community	Three: Leading in-service education and assisting other teachers

APPENDIX 6

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: 2008 – 2009

TEACHER LEADER JOURNAL ENTRIES

Journal Entry 1 (Week 3 October 2008)

Please would you fill in this information in your journal and bring to the focus group interview next week. This information will provide me with background information about the social context of your school and it will help me to get to know you a little better. Please be as honest as you can! I will ensure your anonymity at all times.

About your school:

1. What kind of school is it? (level/ resources/diversity/ size etc)
2. Describe the socio-economic backgrounds of the learners in the school and the surrounding community?
3. How would you describe the culture of your school; in other words, ‘the way things are done around here’?

About you:

1. Name
2. Age
3. Gender
4. Years of experience as a teacher
5. Qualification
6. Which subjects do you teach and which grades?
7. Do you enjoy teaching? Yes/No/Mostly/Occasionally. Why do you say so?
8. Describe your family to me.

Think about yourself as a teacher leader:

1. What do you understand the term ‘teacher leader’ to mean?
2. Describe at least two examples of situations where you work as a teacher leader in your school.

Journal Entry 2 (1st half of November 2008)

Think about a memory (strongly positive or strongly negative) you have when, as a teacher, you led a new initiative in your classroom or school.

1. Tell the story by describing the situation and explaining the new initiative.
2. How did leading this initiative initially make you feel?
3. What was the response to your leadership (either good or bad)?
4. How did this response make you feel?

Journal Entry 3 (2nd half of November 2008)

Think about the forth term of school. It is often described as a term of learner assessment and examination.

1. Describe the different situations where you have worked as a teacher leader. What were the leadership roles you filled? What did you do?
2. How did your leadership impact on others? What was the response from your SMT? What was the response from the teachers?
3. How did being a teacher leader in these situations make you feel?

Journal Entry 4 (1st half of February 2009)

1. Think about yourself as a teacher leader and the personal attributes you have that make you a teacher leader.

- i. List these personal attributes.
- ii. Why do you think these particular attributes are important in developing teacher leaders?
- iii. Are there any other attributes you think are important and which you would like to develop to make you an even better teacher leader?

2. Think about yourself as a teacher leader and the knowledge and skills you have that make you a teacher leader.

- i. List the skills and knowledge you have.
- ii. Why do you think this knowledge and these skills are important in developing teacher leaders?
- iii. Are there any other skills/knowledge you think are important and which you would like to develop to make you an even better teacher leader?

Journal Entry 5 (2nd half of February 2009)

Think about the first term of school. It is often described as a term of planning, especially around curriculum issues.

1. Describe the different situations where you have worked as a teacher leader during this term. What were the leadership roles you filled? What did you do?
2. How did your leadership impact on others? What was the response from your SMT? What was the response from the teachers?
3. How did being a teacher leader in these situations make you feel?

Journal Entry 6 (1st half of March 2009)

Think now about your experience as a teacher leader and ponder on the barriers you have come up against.

1. Describe some of these barriers.
2. What are the reasons for these barriers, do you think?
3. How do you think these barriers can be overcome?
4. How do you think teacher leadership can be promoted?

Journal Entry 7 (2nd half of March 2009)

1. Can you tell a story / describe a situation in each of the following contexts when you worked as a teacher leader:

- i) in your classroom
- ii) working with other teachers in curricular/extra-curricular activities
- iii) in school-wide issues
- iv) networking across schools or working in the school community

2. You have come to the end of your journaling process. Please feel free now to:

- i) ask me any questions
- ii) raise further points
- iii) reflect on the writing process
- iv) reflect on the research process as a whole

APPENDIX 7

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: 2008 – 2009

TEACHER LEADER FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW

1. Talk to me about leadership. What does the word ‘leadership’ mean to you?
2. Talk to me about teacher leadership? What does the term mean to you?
3. When you think of yourself as a teacher leader, what emotions are conjured up? Why do you think you feel this way? What do you suspect is the cause of these emotions?
4. Think about teacher leadership in a perfect school! What would the teacher leader be able to achieve (probe roles/skills/knowledge/relationships)? What support would the teacher leader have (probe culture/ SMT/other teachers etc.)?

Then spend the rest of the interview outlining the project, and explaining our expectations of the teacher leaders. Also talk about the subjective role of the researcher in the process, as well as all the ethical issues.

Thank you!

APPENDIX 8

TEACHER LEADERSHIP IN ACTION: 2008 – 2009

TEACHER LEADER INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW

This interview will be loosely structured and based on the reading of the journals of the teacher leaders. Questions cannot therefore be planned at the outset of the project but will emerge as the research progresses. Questions may also differ from the one teacher leader to the other.

However, broadly speaking, we would like to ascertain during this interview, the following:

1. the personal attributes of these teacher leaders
2. the zones and roles that teacher leaders are engaged in
3. the main barriers that the teacher leaders experience



University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X01
Scottsville
3209

The Principal

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Dear

I am currently a staff member at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I am presently engaged in a group research project which aims to explore teacher leaders in action in schools. Teacher leadership is an emerging field of research in South Africa and I believe that teacher leadership has a powerful role to play in improving the teaching and learning in our South African schools. In this regard I have identified your school as a successful school which exhibits strong leadership at various levels within the institution. I would very much like to conduct research into teacher leadership in your school, and work particularly with three teacher leaders who are willing to work closely with me to extend the boundaries of our knowledge on this concept.

Please note that this is not an evaluation of performance or competence of your teachers and by no means is it a commission of inquiry! The identities of all who participate in this study will be protected in accordance with the code of ethics as stipulated by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I undertake to uphold the autonomy of all participants and they will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to themselves. In this regard, participants will be asked to complete a consent form. Furthermore, in the interests of the participants, feedback will be given to them during and at the end of the project.

As project leader, I can be contacted on 033-2606185 at the Faculty of Education, Room 42A, Pietermaritzburg Campus (School of Education and Development) or on my cell, 0844003347.

Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have any queries or questions you would like answered.

Yours faithfully

Callie Grant



Faculty of Education

Declaration

I (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project. I am willing for my school to be a research school in this project.

Signature of Principal

Date

.....

.....



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL

Faculty of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal
Private Bag X01
Scottsville
3209

The Educator

Dear

I am currently a staff member at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I am presently engaged in a group research project which aims to explore teacher leaders in action in schools. Teacher leadership is an emerging field of research in South Africa and I believe that teacher leadership has a powerful role to play in improving the teaching and learning in our South African schools. In this regard I have identified your school as a successful school which exhibits strong leadership at various levels within the institution. I would very much like to conduct research into teacher leadership in your school, and work particularly with three teacher leaders who are willing to work closely with me to extend the boundaries of our knowledge on this concept.

Please note that this is not an evaluation of performance or competence of your teachers and by no means is it a commission of inquiry! The identities of all who participate in this study will be protected in accordance with the code of ethics as stipulated by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I undertake to uphold the autonomy of all participants and they will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to themselves. In this regard, participants will be asked to complete a consent form. Furthermore, in the interests of the participants, feedback will be given to them during and at the end of the project.

As project leader, I can be contacted on 033-2606185 at the Faculty of Education, Room 42A, Pietermaritzburg Campus (School of Education and Development) or on my cell, 0844003347. Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have any queries or questions you would like answered.

Yours sincerely

Callie Grant
Project Leader

.....DETACH AND RETURN.....

Declaration

I (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project. I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that I reserve the right to withdraw from this project at any time.

Signature of participant

Date



Faculty of Education

University of KwaZulu-Natal

Private Bag X01

Scottsville

3209

Letter of Invitation

Dear

I am sending this invitation to you as a teacher who might be interested in participating in a research project about teacher leadership in schools. My name is Callie Grant and I am currently a staff member at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg. I am presently leading a group research project which aims to explore teacher leaders in action in schools. Teacher leadership is an emerging field of research in South Africa and I believe that teacher leadership has a powerful role to play in improving the teaching and learning in our schools. In this regard I have identified your school as a successful school which exhibits strong leadership at various levels within the institution. I would very much like to conduct research into teacher leadership in your school, and work closely with you, particularly, to extend the boundaries of our knowledge on this concept.

The research project is framed by the following broad research questions:

1. How is teacher leadership enacted in schools?
2. What factors enhance or hinder this 'enactment'?

I am seeking three teachers from your school who:

-
- Are interested in making a contribution to this research.
 - See themselves as teacher leaders.
 - Are interested in developing teacher leadership opportunities in schools.

Please note that this is not an evaluation of performance or competence of you as a teacher. Your identity will be protected in accordance with the code of ethics as stipulated by the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I undertake to uphold your autonomy and you will be free to withdraw from the research at any time without negative or undesirable consequences to themselves. In this regard, you will be asked to complete a consent form. Furthermore, feedback will be given to you during and at the end of the project.

As project leader, I can be contacted on 033-2606185 at the Faculty of Education, Room 42A, Pietermaritzburg Campus (School of Education and Development) or on my cell, 0844003347. Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have any queries or questions you would like answered.

Yours sincerely

Callie Grant

Project Leader



Faculty of Education

Declaration

I (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of this research project. I am willing to participate in this research project.

I understand that I reserve the right to withdraw from this project at any time.

Signature of Teacher Leader

Date

.....

.....

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER LEADERSHIP

Zones	Roles	Indicators
1.	1. Continuing to teach and improve one's own teaching in the classroom	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. centrality of expert practice (including appropriate teaching and assessment strategies and expert knowledge) 2. keep abreast of new developments (attendance at workshops & further study) for own professional development 3. design of learning activities and improvisation/appropriate use of resources 4. processes of record keeping and reflective practice 5. engagement in classroom action research 6. maintain effective classroom discipline and meaningful relationship with learners (evidence of pastoral care role) 7. take initiative and engage in autonomous decision-making to make change happen in classroom to benefit of learners
2.	2. Providing curriculum development knowledge (in own school)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. joint curriculum development (core and extra/co curricular) 2. team teaching 3. take initiative in subject committee meetings 4. work to contextualise curriculum for own particular school 5. attend DOE curriculum workshops and take new learning, with critique, back to school staff 6. extra/co curricular coordination (e.g. sports, cultural activities etc)
2.	3. Leading in-service education and assisting other teachers (in own school)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. forge close relationships and build rapport with individual teachers through which mutual learning takes place 2. staff development initiatives 3. peer coaching 4. mentoring role of teacher leaders (including induction) 5. building skills and confidence in others 6. work with integrity, trust and transparency
2.	4. Participating in performance evaluation of teachers (in own school)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. engage in IQMS activities such as peer assessment (involvement in development support groups) 2. informal peer assessment tasks 3. moderation of assessment tasks 4. reflections on core and co/extra curricular activities
3.	5. Organising and leading peer reviews of school practice (in own school)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. organisational diagnosis (Audit – SWOT) and dealing with the change process (School Development Planning) 2. whole school evaluation processes 3. school based action research 4. mediating role (informal mediation as well as union representation) 5. school practices including fundraising, policy development, staff development, professional development initiatives etc)
3.	6. Participating in school level decision-making (in own school)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. awareness of and non-partisan to micro-politics of school (work with integrity, trust and transparency) 2. participative leadership where all teachers feel part of the change or development and have a sense of ownership 3. problem identification and resolution 4. conflict resolution and communication skills 5. school-based planning and decision-making
4.	2. Providing curriculum development knowledge (across schools into community)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. joint curriculum development (core and extra/co curricular) 2. liaise with and empower parents about curriculum issues (parent meetings, visits, communication – written or verbal) 3. liaise with and empower parents about curriculum issues (SCB meetings, workshops, training – influencing of agendas) 4. networking at circuit/district/regional/provincial level through committee or cluster meeting involvement
4.	3. Leading in-service education and assisting other teachers (across schools into community)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. forge close relationships and build rapport with individual teachers through which mutual learning takes place 2. staff development initiatives 3. peer coaching 4. mentoring role of teacher leaders (including induction) 5. building skills and confidence in others 6. work with integrity, trust and transparency

Table A: Summary of Harms and Ameliorative Measures*

Kind of Harm	Minimal	Minor Increase over Minimal	Major	Ways to Ameliorate
Inconvenience	Boring, interruption	Unexpected major involvement		Adequate informed consent
	Most vulnerable are those with complicated lives or time constraints.			
Physical Harm	Transitory or very minor injury	First aid may be indicated	Violent assault, life threatening**	Appropriate safety considerations
	Most vulnerable: Those in contexts in which there are safety issues.			
Psychological Harm				
Worry (warranted or otherwise)	All of these psychological harms are highly idiosyncratic in occurrence and degree of harm, and difficult to predict. Sensitive administered informed consent can give persons an opportunity to decline if feeling particularly fragile and vulnerable. Post-research procedures (debriefing and desensitizing, offering counseling, making referrals) can ameliorate or prevent harms and turn unpleasant experiences into lasting benefits. These are excellent opportunities for subjects to learn and grow from the experience; debriefing should be educational and nurture personal insight and wisdom. Reiteration of confidentiality measures taken to prevent disclosure may be useful after participation in some research. Deception and concealment, especially with powerful induction to involve self in upsetting or reprehensible acts is ameliorated by initial consent to concealment with promise of total debriefing. An alternative, when studying aggressive or other reprehensible behavior is to study response to heavily induced desirable behavior (e.g., disobedience to authority).			
Upset, depression				
Embarrassment				
Shame or Guilt				
Loss of Self-Confidence				
Disrespectful Treatment of Subjects	This is an attribute of the researcher or the research treatment that may cause any of the other above forms of psychological harm. Effective respectful congruent communication (not a consent form) is essential.			
	Most vulnerable: those who are immature or emotionally fragile.			
Social Harm	Transitory embarrassment	Short-term minor stigma, conflict	Long-term stigma or scapegoating	Confidentiality & privacy protected
	Most vulnerable: those with something to hide.			
Economic Harm	Loss of a few \$\$s	Short-term loss of financial opportunity	Loss of credit, insurance, job, loss of lawsuit	Compensate minor harm, assure privacy & confidentiality
	Most vulnerable: those in need of relevant forms of financial security			
Legal Harm	Involvement with law enforcement	Misdemeanor conviction	Subpoena of damaging data, felony conviction	Certificate of Confidentiality, anonymity
	Most vulnerable: those involved in studies of illegal behavior and those currently involved in legal action relating to the research (whose data might be subpoenaed by the prosecution or opposing party).			

*Table prepared for the Social and Behavioral Sciences Working Group on Human Research Protections by Joan E. Sieber, Working Group member (January 2004).

**Major harms of this nature are secondary.